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PREVIEWS: TAMIYA JS-2 ■ DRAGON FH-18 ■ RESICAST AOP ■ AND MORE...

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BUFFALO SOLDIER

Matt Edwards puts Italeri's LVT-4 into a watery scene

WACHT AM RHEIN

Frank Helmling concludes his two part feature on a 1:16 King Tiger

NO STEP
ROYAL AIR FORCE
ET
ET

PAINT IT BLACK!

Robert Doepp illustrates how to paint a Panzer crewman's black uniform

HYDRAULIC PALM TREE

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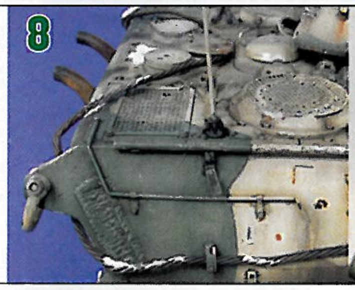

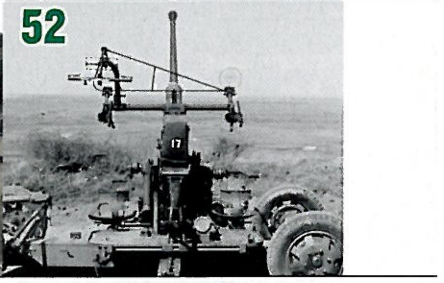

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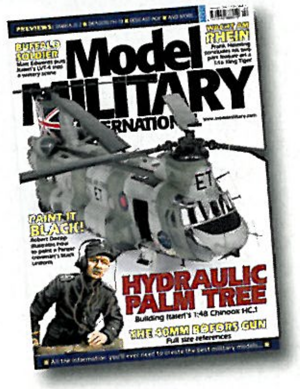

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Diary Dates...

February 3rd
IPMS Milton Keynes present ModelKraft 2008 to be held at a new venue, Stantonbury Leisure Centre, MK14 6BN. Open 10am - 4pm with over 500 free car parking spaces. A café will be offering refreshments.
www.mksmc.co.uk

February 9th
The Fleet Air Arm Museum will be holding their annual model show and open competition. RNAS Yeovilton, Ilchester, Somerset BA22 8HT
Tel 01935 840565.
www.fleetairarm.com

February 17th
IPMS Wakefield present 'Huddersfield 2008' to be held at the Huddersfield Sports Centre, Southgate, Huddersfield, West Yorkshire HD1 1TW. For information go to *http://groups.msn.com/ipmswakefield/huddersfield08.msnw* or *andrewscholefield@yahoo.co.uk*

February 24th
The South Cheshire Militaire celebrates its 25th Anniversary show at the Oakley Centre, Crewe, Cheshire.
For more info visit: *www.southcheshiremilitaire.co.uk*
email: *show@southcheshiremilitaire.co.uk* or call Phil on 01270 256880

March 15th and 16th
Southern Expo 2008
Hornchurch Sports Centre, Hornchurch Road, Hornchurch, Essex RM11 1ET. 10am-5pm
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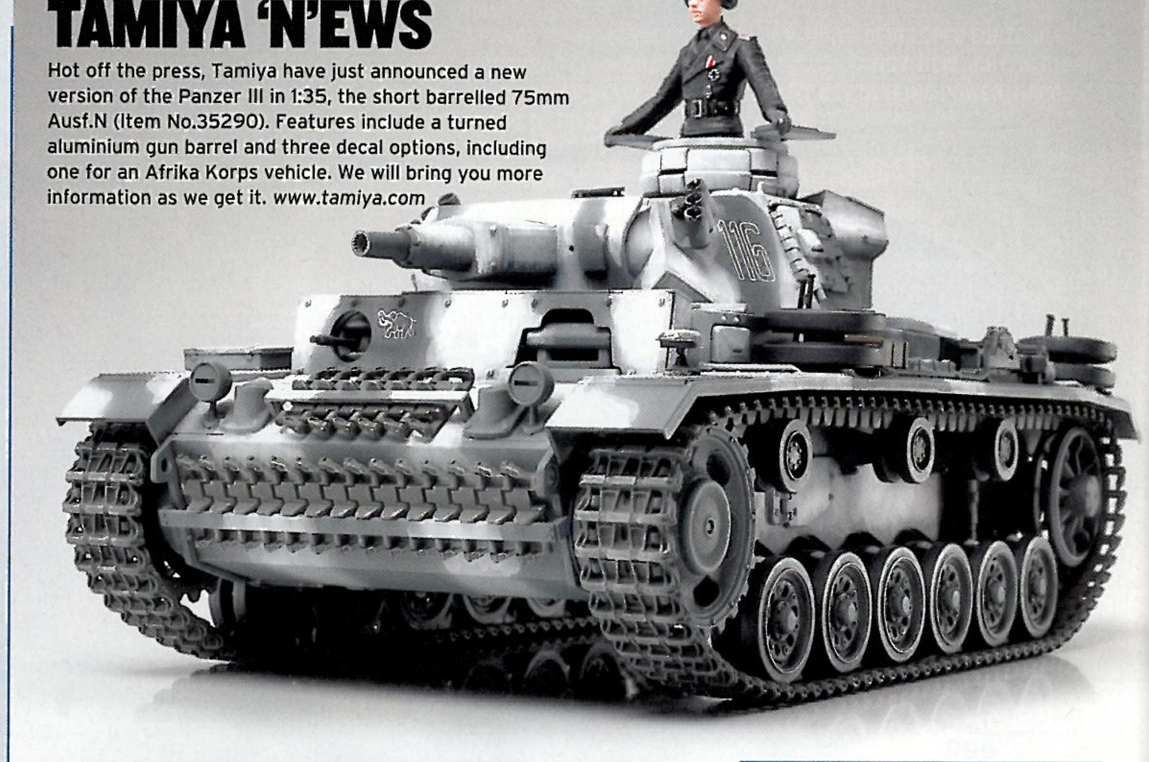
March 16th
The Potteries Model Show will be held at Meir Community Centre, Pickford Place, Meir, Stoke-on-Trent, ST3 7DY. Doors open at 10am.
There will be club displays, traders, an open competition and refreshments on site.
For further information please contact Alan Ewart on 01782 388892 or Mick Copestake on 01782 392353 alternately email *ewaal253@aol.com*

TAMIYA 'N'EWS

Hot off the press, Tamiya have just announced a new version of the Panzer III in 1:35, the short barrelled 75mm Ausf.N (Item No.35290). Features include a turned aluminium gun barrel and three decal options, including one for an Afrika Korps vehicle. We will bring you more information as we get it. *www.tamiya.com*



HAULER NEWS

If there is one thing we can rely on in this hobby, it is Hauler constantly producing some excellent detail sets and conversions for the ever expanding range of 1:48 armour coming from companies such as Tamiya and HobbyBoss. This is what's new;
HLC35004 horseshoes and stamp
HLX48216 Steyr 1500 Funk-Koffer for (Tamiya)
HLX48219 Flammpanzer 38(t) Hetzer conversion set (for Tamiya)
HLX48218 Farmer cart
HLX48221 Steyer 1500 Pritsche conversion set (for Tamiya)

TYPE 2 "HO-I"
二式砲戦車[ホイ]
034
035

WHOLE SALE NEWS

There are some interesting new kits on the way from Tristar and Fine Molds thanks to *Modelwholesaleuk.com*. These include a 1:35 IJA Tank Destroyer Type2 'Ho-I' from Fine Molds and from Tristar, a 1:35 Fi-156 A-0/C-1 Storch and Flakpanzer 38(t) Ausf. L (Sd Kfz 140). A test shot of the Flakpanzer was on display at Scale Model World and it looked superb, complete with a full interior and stunning detail throughout.
For prices and stockists please go to *www.modelwholesaleuk.com*

X-ACTO

Good news for anyone who uses the X-Acto range modelling tools, as these are now stocked by the Airbrush Company and according to Alex Medwell, they will carry the full range.
I personally use X-Acto craft knives and Razor saws all the time, so I for one think this is great news. (The Ed).
For a complete list of the range, checkout *www.airbrushes.com*

MPM WINNER

We are pleased to announce the winner of the MPM competition in Issue 19 is *Mr. A. Pink* from Godalming, Surrey.
The correct answer to the question 'What does NASA stand for?' is:
National Aeronautics and Space Administration.

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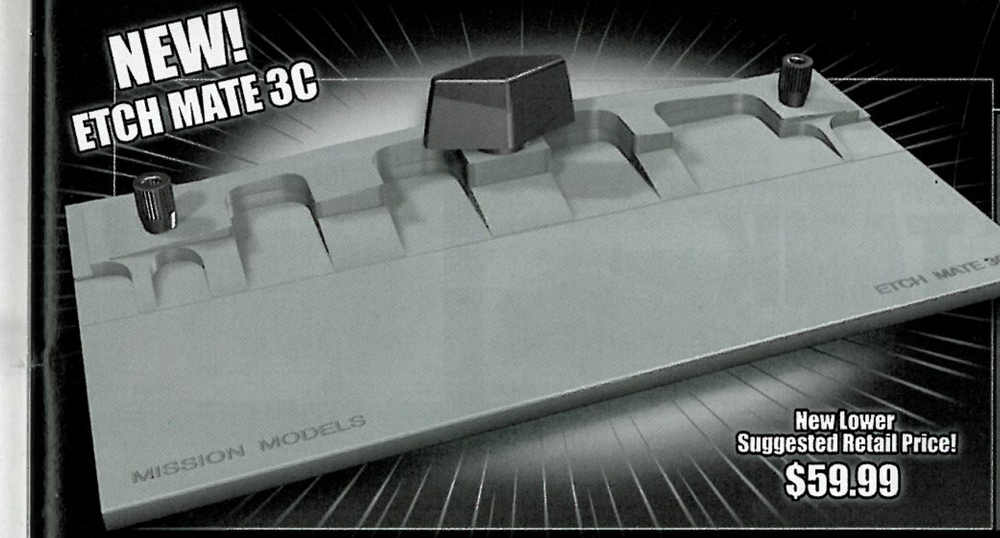

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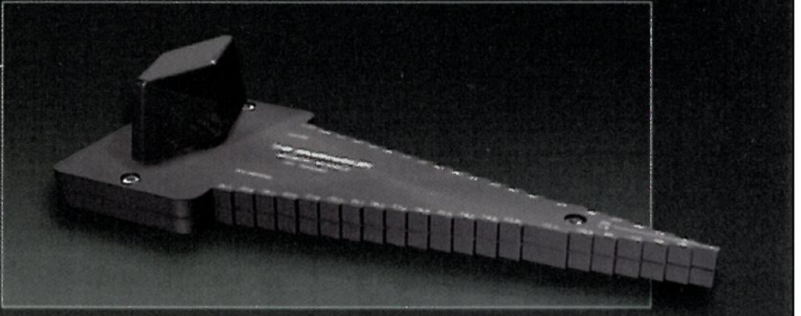

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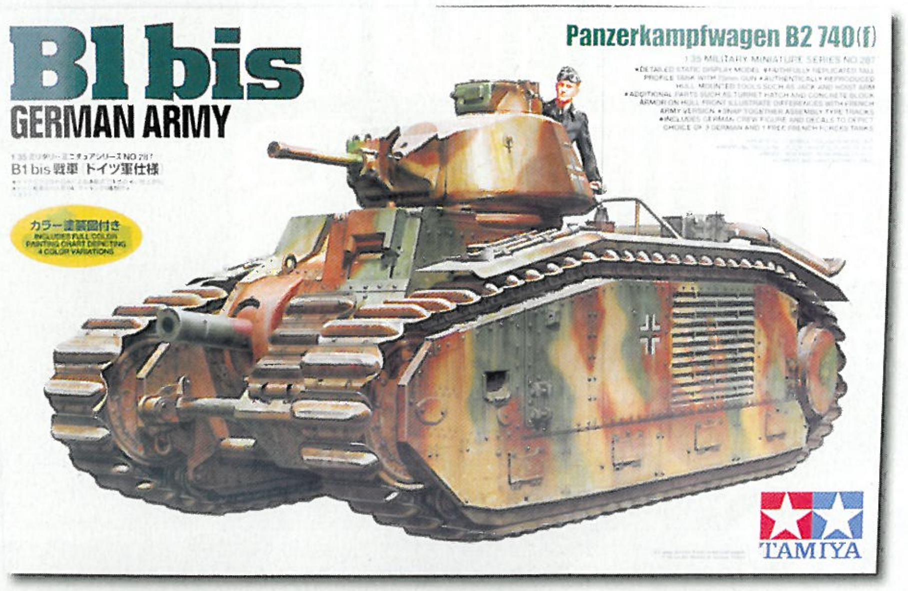


TURN-COAT TANK

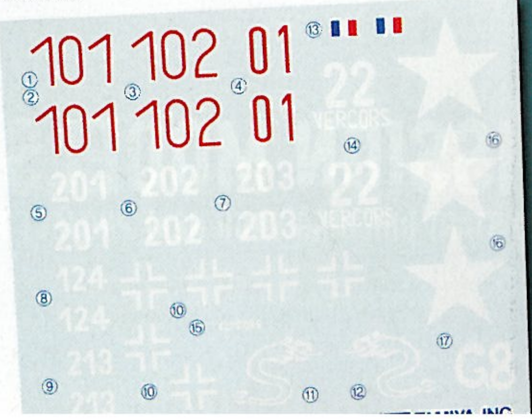
Andrew Willis takes a peek inside Tamiya's German Army Char B1 bis box.

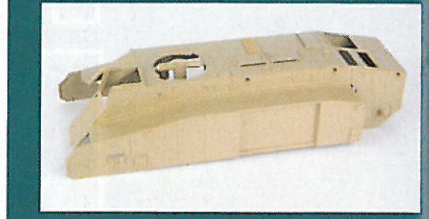
When Tamiya announced the Char B1 bis, upon which this kit is based, there was almost an audible sigh of relief from modellers; this was because up to that point it was felt that Tamiya was withdrawing from the 1:35 market to concentrate on their newer 1:48 range. While Tamiya has increased the 1:48 range at a vast rate, they have also increased their 1:35 range at a quicker pace than in recent years.

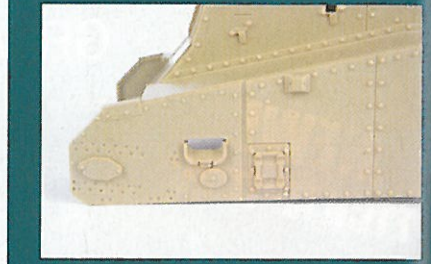
This model is, as would be expected, heavily based on the previous French version. What this means is the usual trademark Tamiya, well loved by many modellers, most of whom grew up building Tamiya kits. The box art is superb and just sells the kit - in fact, so good is Tamiya box art that it can be used as an extra reference guide. The instruction sheet is the usual clear and concise document which easily guides the modeller in 21 steps. Something that has found its way into Tamiya boxes of late is a large sheet of full colour painting guides for all four of the decal options in five views each. On the reverse side of the painting guide is a potted history of the vehicle in question, and this one is of particular interest as it covers the tank currently in the Bovington Tank Museum. I knew that the Bovington B1 bis was ex-German as it carries the German jacks, but what I did not know was that it was re-captured on the Channel Islands from 213th Heavy Panzer Battalion. As mentioned earlier, the decal sheet covers four vehicles: three captured German, two in Panzer Grey and one in three colour camouflage, and finally a Free French Forces in Olive drab from April 1945. It is this clever choice of markings that make this model such a good companion to the French Char B released earlier: you can build a 1940 Fall of France with the first kit and a 1945 liberation of France with this second kit.

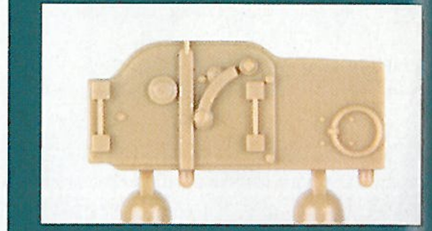
The box contains all the sprues from the previous model and the bag of loose track links (these would be labelled Magic Track if this was a Dragon kit), and a length of chain. Unique to this kit is a small sprue labelled E. This contains all the parts added or changed by the Germans: new commanders cupola which had a split hatch added, a new aerial mount, two jacks, German on-vehicle tools, new exhaust stubs, the concrete armour that was added to the area above the main gun and a new German commander figure. The parts are all cleanly moulded and contain sharp detail but more importantly, in my view, they are attached to the sprues with thin attachment points that make them easier to clip from the sprue trees with a flat faced cutter.

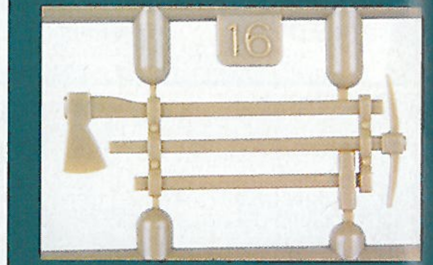
So up to now all typical Tamiya quality, but there are also the fairly common few missed items by Tamiya. The pig tail lifting hook is missing from the main gun mount, as are the bolts or bolt holes from around the main gun. Also missing is the opening for the mud chutes underneath the top run of track. This is actually marked out on the model but is not stated as needing to be opened in stage 7 of the instructions. The commander's cupola has three lifting hooks missing, and if you use the French version then there are also two rows of small bolt heads missing from the top. Lastly, there should be a row of bolts along the top of the hull, just under the top row of the tracks. All of these items appear on the box art, just to prove my comment on how good Tamiya's box art truly is. Please do not feel I am being overly negative; I bought the first Char B bis kit with my own money and almost took the Editor's hand off to get this kit to review. As a final note, this kit is promising because it shows willingness from Tamiya to rework existing models to release extra versions - something they have been unwilling to do in the past. This all bodes well for the IS-2m, which may be followed by the earlier IS-2 and ISU-122 versions. ■

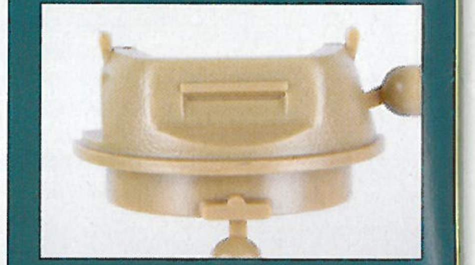












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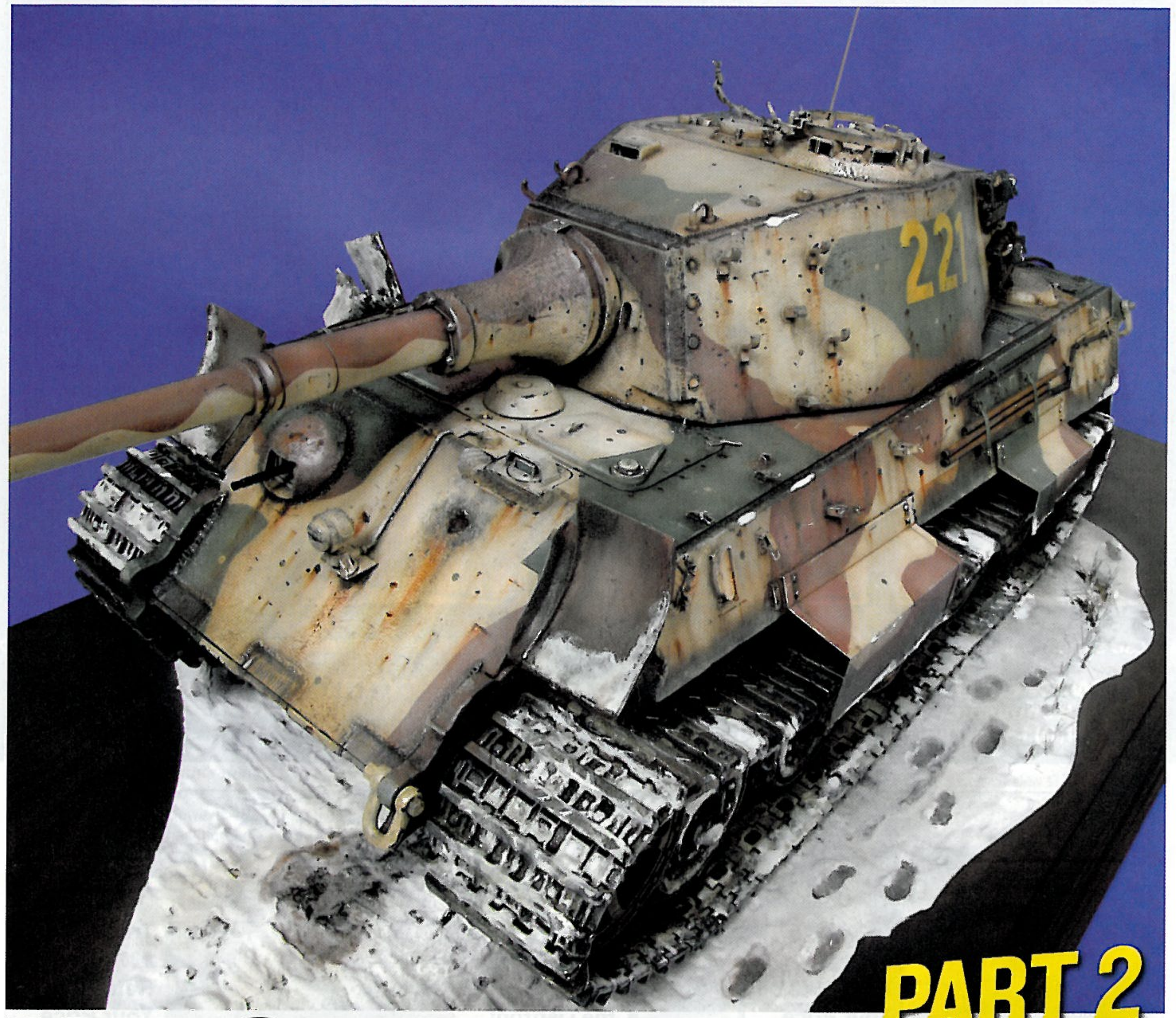


PART 2
WACHT AM RHEIN

Frank Helmling concludes his two part feature on King Tiger 221.

In Issue 17 I covered the construction, including all the upgrades added to Tamiya's impressive 1:16 Full Option radio controlled King Tiger. In the concluding part of my article I will now describe the way I painted it.

A lot has been written on painting and weathering AFVs and depending on your point of view authentic or artistic is the way to go, but at the end of the day it all boils down to personal taste. So without wishing to offend anyone by saying what is the right or wrong way to paint a model and what are the right colours to use, this is how I painted my King Tiger.

My aim this time is not to sum up all of the techniques on shading, filtering and washing. It's a fact that you can't put all of he existing techniques on a model, or it would result in it's visual 'death'. Everone paints in a different style, many of which have influenced me over the years, but at the moment I have to admit the style I am currently influenced by is obviously the 'Spanish school', represented by Mig Jimenez in particular. Prior to describing 'Fahrzeug 221', I'm going to bust a common myth when it comes to painting a vehicle.

In my opinion there is no such thing as an authentic colour! I have studied lots refernce including of wartime colour photos and paint chips, I have concluded that even allowing for film processing etc., there are many tones of paint even though they all officially have come from the same sources, especially camouflage colours, which were often applied in the field and therefore thinned with whatever would act as a dilutant, such as water, fuel or has even been applied without any thinning, using brushes or even bare hands.

Sun and rain tended to bleach the base colours to an enormous extent! The smaller the scale, the darker a certain colour becomes! Colours are made from tiny particles of pigment which reflect light. Larger surfaces reflect a greater overall amount of light and are therefore perceived as being brighter. The surfaces on the real tank are much bigger, therefore an identical colour tends to look much darker on a model than on the real vehicle!

So, we have to lighten the colours anyway before applying them onto the model to take into account this 'scale effect'. Shading and weathering will alter and darken the colours to an unpredictable degree!

BACK TO THE KOENIGSTIGER:

"Fahrzeug 221" displayed the so called "Hinterhalttarnung" (Ambush spot pattern) which raises two questions:

- How should a hard edged camo scheme be shaded?
- How many ambush spots and what size should they be?

All will be answered later.

Glossary Spot!

"HINTERHALTTARNUNG" (AMBUSH SPOT PATTERN)
Also known as "Licht und Schattentarnung" (shadow and light scheme). Created under the pressure of allied air superiority towards the end of the war, to simulate the incidence of sunlight shining through the trees on the ground, since German tanks spent most of the daytime hiding out between trees and foliage to avoid detection by allied fighter-bombers.

BASIC PAINTING

The model was given a clean using warm soapy water to de-grease it prior to applying a coat of primer, in this case I chose Tamiya excellent aerosol Primer. The next step was to cover the entire model with XF-68 NATO Brown mixed as explained in the tech tips section.

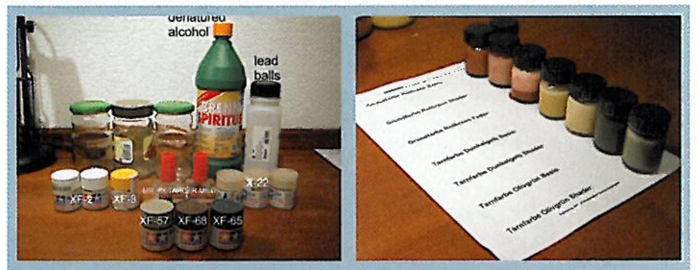
I started the masking process by cutting out wavy strips from a roll of 40mm wide Tamiya masking tape, the tape was then placed carefully onto the model taking care that the tape was pressed into all crevices and corners, this was critical as I didn't want the paint 'bleeding' under the tape ruining the hard edged finish. As there are only a few photos of the real vehicle existing I did a fair amount of artwork while creating the camo pattern to help me visualize the complete scheme and to help me find the best way to fill the gaps in the scheme that I couldn't find in my reference library. Referring to photos of other King Tigers from the same unit, there seams is no such thing as a standard pattern from the references even though it has been factory applied. The only common feature on all of the tanks painted in this scheme is the wavy line along the length of the gun barrel.

As mentioned earlier, there's no such thing as an authentic colour, so I decided to give completely new tones a try, which included XF-57 Buff for the dark yellow and XF-65 Field Grey for the dark green which led, together with the lightening mixtures, to a very light overall finish. Far to light to leave like this, but with the rule in mind, that every step from now on, would help to tone down and darken the final look!

After the entire tank had been covered with the scheme, I checked the pattern for mistakes and breaks in the overall flow of the pattern. It took me a week or so, before I was finally satisfied with this stage. I then cut templates for the numbers from Tamiya masking tape and sprayed them on. Now the real fun could begin!

How should a hard edged camo scheme be shaded? My decision was to pre-shade every colour on it's own (which meant the yellow numbers too) and to post-shade the entire vehicle using Tamiya's secret weapon X-19 Smoke mixed with small amounts of Flat Base. The post-shading process has been carried out over all the edges and corners, I also used the Smoke to add vertical rain streaks down the sides of the turret and hull.

▶

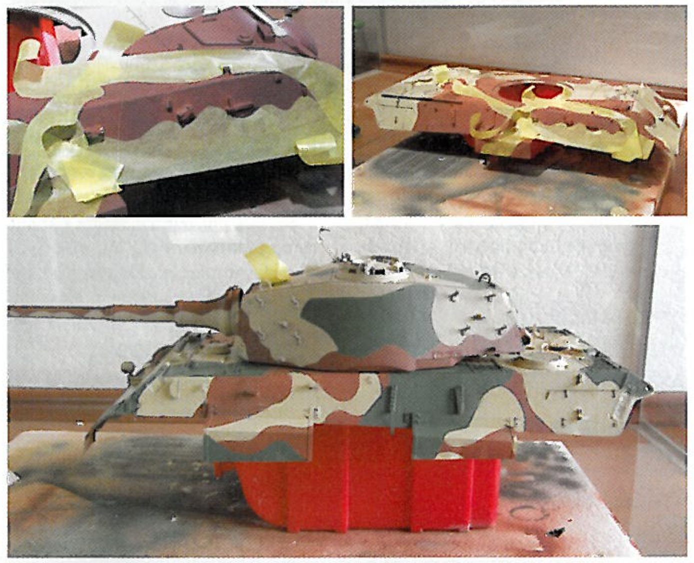


Tech Tip! - PREPARING COLOURS

I like to prepare my colours prior to the painting process, so that I don't have to care about anything concerning these colours later on.

First of all you should choose the single base colour(s) or mix them from different tones. In this case they came OOJ (out of the jar). The next step is to add white and a few drops of yellow to every colour in a marmalade jar, together with a fair amount of gloss varnish. Some retarder is next followed by 3-5 lead balls. Double the amount of ingredients with alcohol and shake well. These are the basic shades from which you create at least two shades: The original base colour and its 'fader' by adding more white. The main base colour further received a 'fader' by adding more thinner to the base colour. This is the arsenal to form the basic paint job.

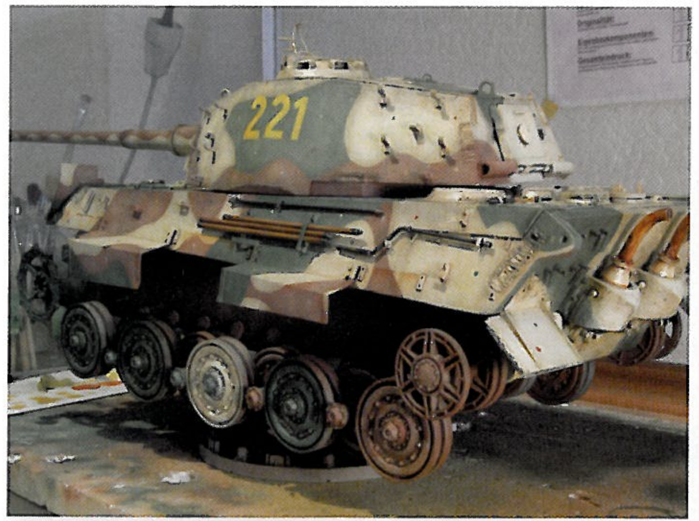
After an initial coat of Tamiya aerosol primer the entire model was airbrushed in Tamiya NATO Brown XF-68 mixed as explained in the 'tech tips' section.

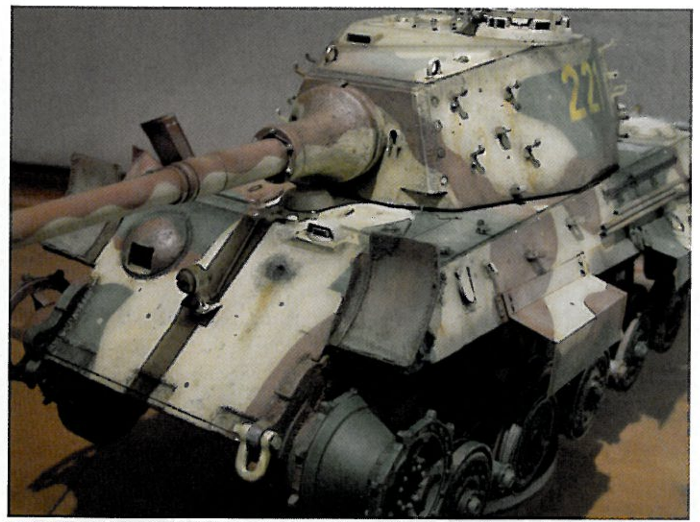


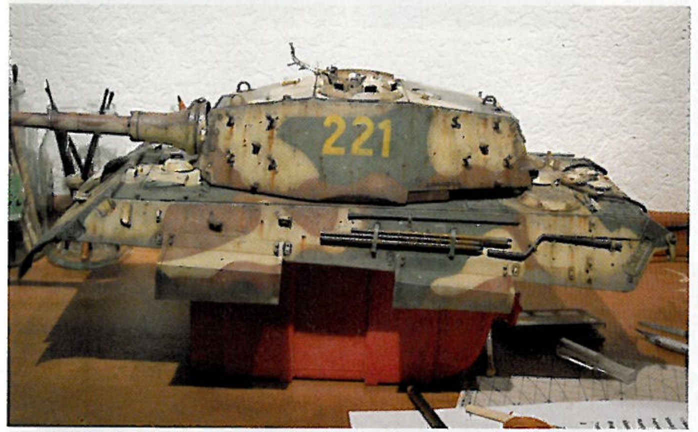
The complex camouflage pattern was carefully masked off using Tamiya's low-tack masking tape. Care was taken to rub the tape down into all the corners to prevent the paint creeping under it.

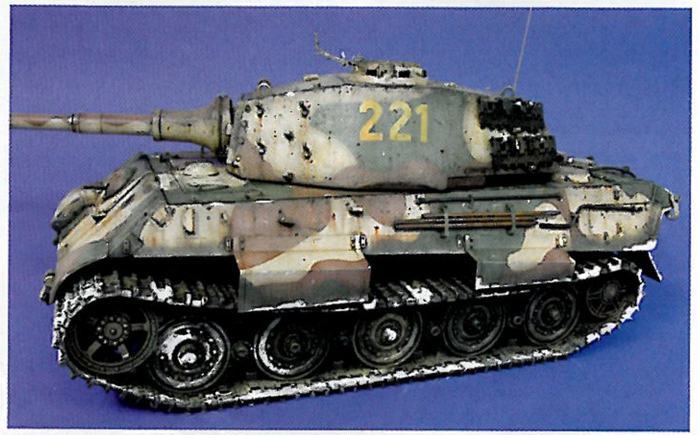
The turret numbers were created by cutting templates from masking tape and spraying on Tamiya XF-3 Yellow. Note that the camo colours have not been faded and shaded at this point.

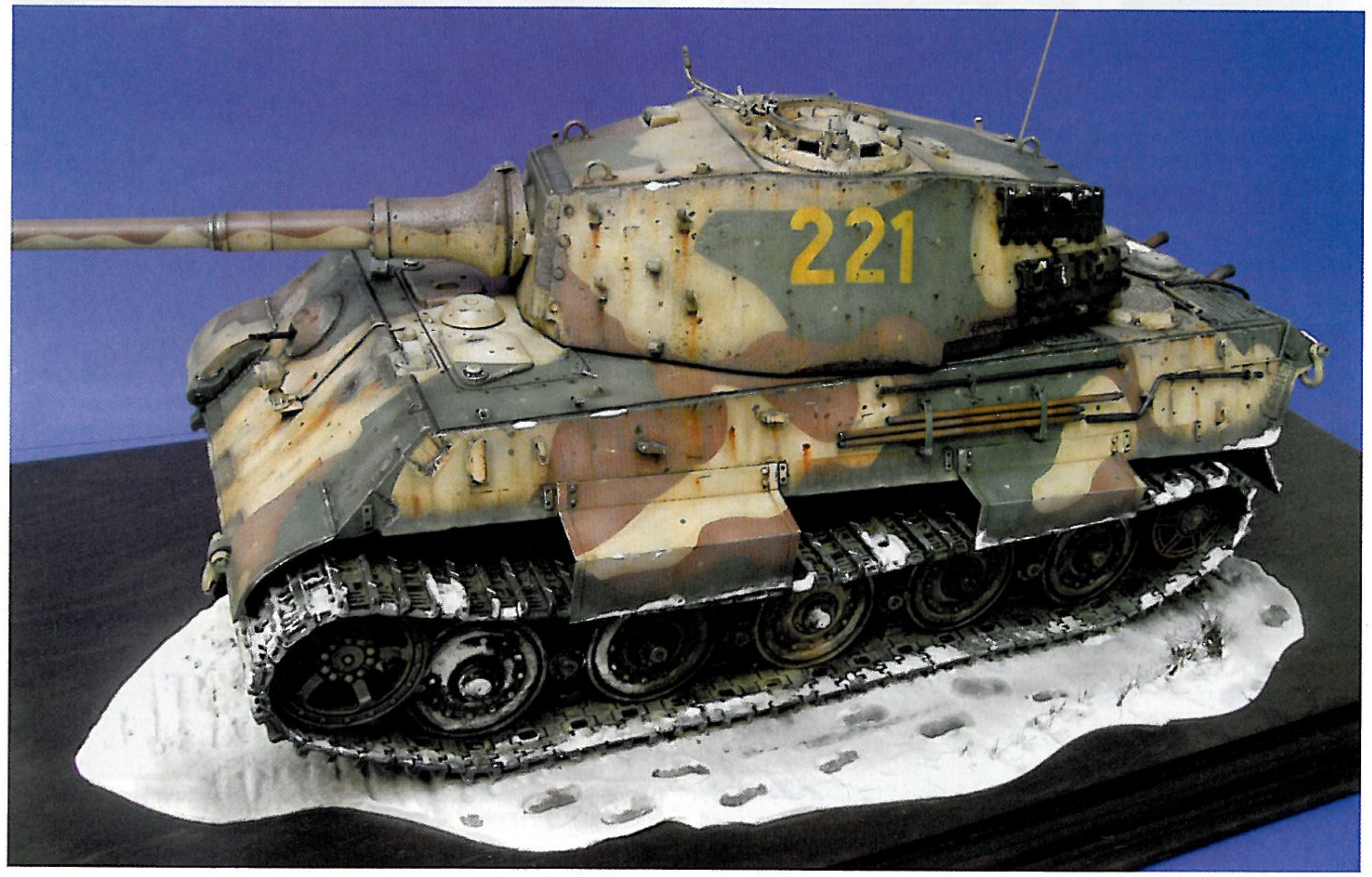
The King Tiger has now received the initial fading to all three of the camouflage colours, this effect is more noticeable on the green and red brown.


Brown, yellow and blue filters have been applied at this stage. The filters are the first stage of the weathering to tone down and darken the colour scheme.


Following the filters, an oil paint colourwash is applied, which is designed to accentuate the details, textures and add depth to recessed lines etc.


Working on such a large and heavy model, the author found it easier to work on the turret and upper hull's weathering. Here the chipping and rust streaks and stains are being applied.


Above and below; the finished model complete with Signifer's realistic looking Artificial Snow.



◀ How many ambush spots and of what size and form should they be? You can see the disastrous result of too many and too prominent spots so often on models featuring this scheme that I decided to add them very carefully as there is no general rule on their number obvious from the references: Some feature more, some less, as I planned to add some extra spots afterwards using oils, I thought would be wise to go with the old adage, less is more!

FILTERS

The next step involved the application of blue, yellow and brown coloured filters over the entire model, these filters help enrich and warm the tones of the base colours (to get a full understanding of how these filters work I would recommended getting hold of a copy of Mig's excellent FAQ book).

WASHES

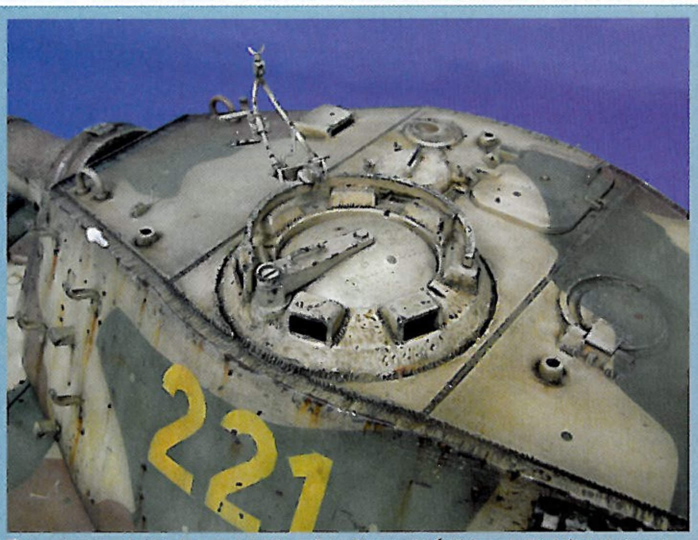
I started with a heavy wash around the prominent details using Vandyke Brown, any excess was dabbed off using a clean cloth before it was allowed to dry fully. The next wash involved a thinner one using a darker Burnt Umber, this was allowed to flow more freely. The last wash was a very light, almost black wash on the darkest sections of the model, to name them: The engine deck, front mudguards and the brown camouflaged parts of the gun mantlet. To further enhance the cast texture of the mantlet, I decided to drybrush it with a very light grey (almost white) colour. It adds to the overall rough impression of the mantlet's texture but isn't noticeable until you look really closely.

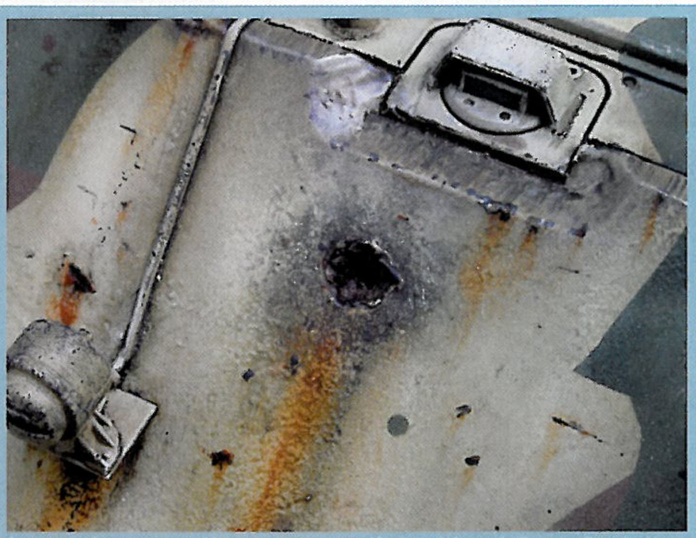
The author constructed his own spray booth/fume extractor cabinet using cooker extractor hood. Working on 1:16 scale models demands a large work bench, as can be seen here.

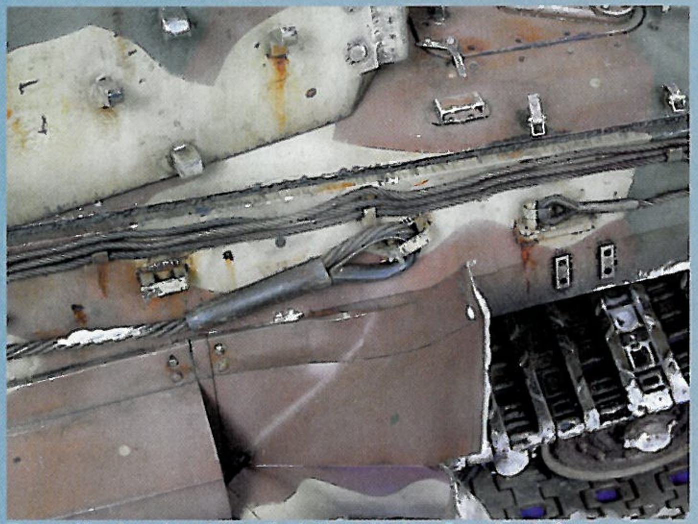
CHIPPED PAINT

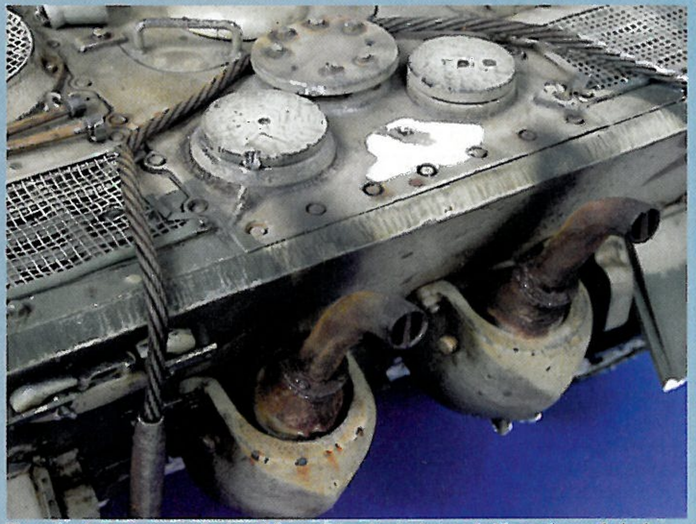
Chipping is the hardest part of all, because you want to see it - in fact, most models need it - but not everyone knows when to stop, or where the most obvious places this effect should appear. So my decision was to leave the horizontal surfaces, except for the engine deck and the edges almost untouched. To create the chips, anything goes, enamels and oils, a paintbrush and a sponge or even a toothpick and that's exactly what I did.

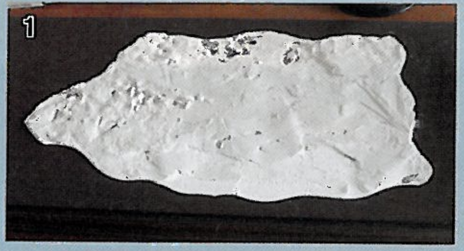
The rusty look on some of the chips and details came from a combination of pastel, oil and Tamiya's weathering master range. A second post-shading was completed using X-19 Smoke again, this time with more Flat Base added. I deliberately added small amounts of mud to ▶


The combination of paint chips, rust streaks and graphite powder (which was rubbed along the turret edges) help create the effect that the plastic model really is made from heavy armour plate.


Some battle damage was added in the form of some small arms and shrapnel splinter marks, or in this case, something with a little more punch! A jeweller's burr in a motor tool was used to achieve this effect.


The tow cable ends, retaining clamps and etched brass side skirts all came from the German company Schumo, who offer a comprehensive range of upgrades and detail sets for Tamiya's 1:16 RC tanks.


The engine deck screens are also from Schumo. Although only photo-etched brass, they really do give the impression of being made from real woven wire. Note the realistic rusty exhausts, created with a combination oil paints and weathering pigments, applied while the oils were still wet.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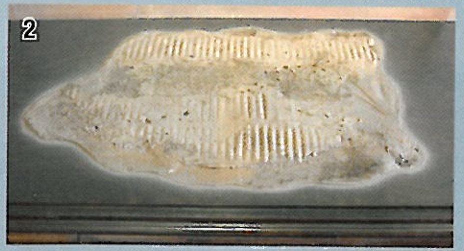
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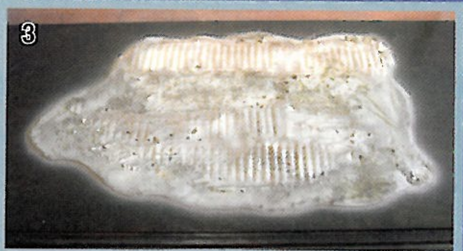
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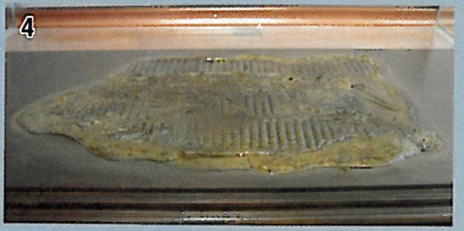
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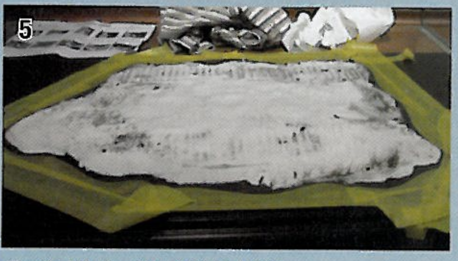
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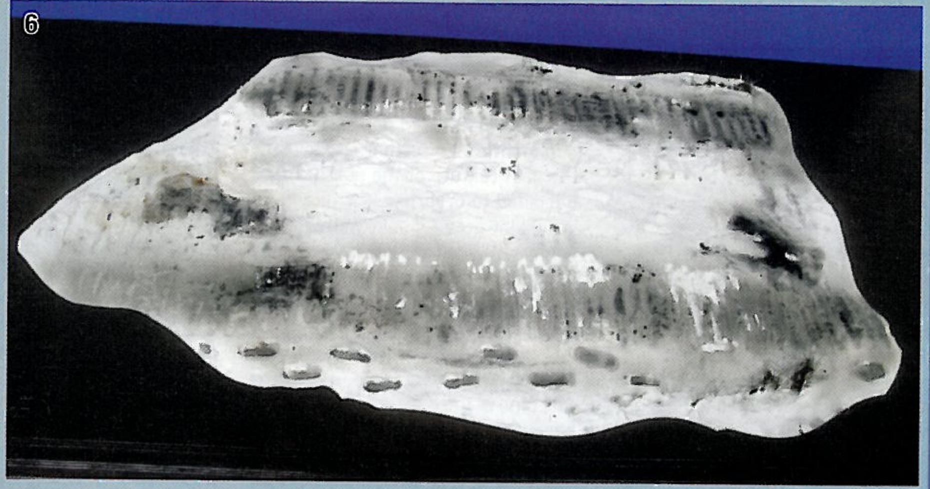
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Tech Tip! - SNOW BASE

The concept for the base came from the idea that my 'Ardennes thawed weather look' would look odd and out of place, unless it was visually tied in with some form of groundwork. So I had to make groundwork depicting thawing ground and melting snow. I started with some plaster to add track traces. I painted the plaster with different earthy colours from Tamiya acrylics to create shades before using oils to further enhance this effect. A gloss coat came next, to impart a wet muddy effect beneath the snow. The snow products available today are a quantum leap from what was available not so long ago. I chose a product called Artificial Snow (SN99001) which is available from the small French manufacturer, Signifer. After its application you have to wait for 2-3 hours and then there's plenty of time to add footprints and other details since the total setting time is around 48 hrs.

complement the snow on the road wheels and tracks. Of course, absolutely no dust should be applied! OK, I have to plead guilty since I used dust coloured pastels to enhance the faded look of the base colours on the turret roof.

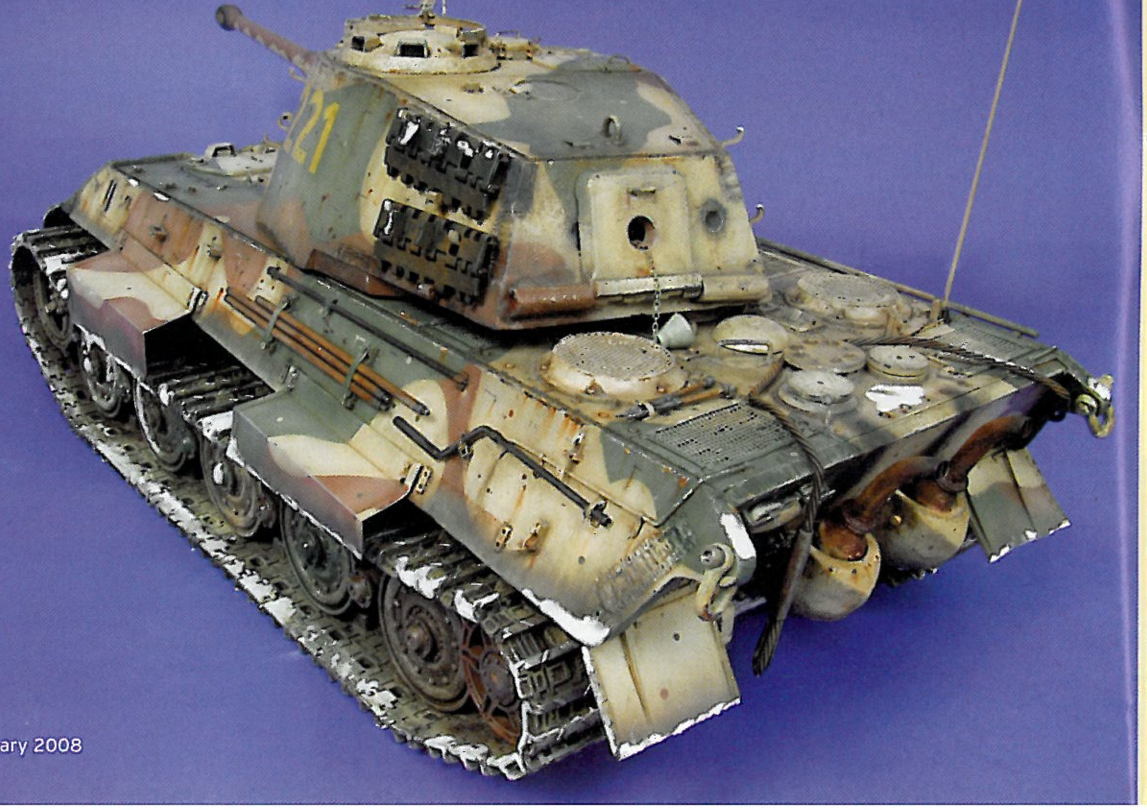
I carefully added more weathering until I considered the look to be, how should I say, pretty ugly or appropriate? But I wanted it to look cold and bleak so the weathering needed to be taken another step.

ICE AND SNOW

The idea behind this project was to treat the tank as if there is a slight thaw in the wintry conditions. Therefore the tracks and road wheels received a fair amount of gloss varnish to enhance the already silk-matt (semi gloss) appearance of the surfaces creating that damp and wet look. The snow came from Signifer as explained in the tech tips section. The ice on the tracks and mudguards comes from layers of gloss acrylic varnish. Since the binder for the snow is also acrylic based, the varnish affects the snow up to a degree where the snow starts 'melting' which leads to astonishing effects.

CONCLUSION

I'm really pleased I have had the opportunity to feature my 1:16 scale models in MMI and show what great modelling projects they can be, I hope they have been as interesting to read about as they have been to build? ■



Modelspec

Tamiya 1:16 King Tiger (full option) **Kit No. 56018**
For full model spec please check out part one in issue 17 (Sept 07)

Paints and Materials

Masking Tape 40mm
TAMIYA
XF-1 Black, XF-2 White, XF-3 Yellow, XF-9 Hull Red, XF-52 Flat Earth, XF-57 Buff, XF-65 Field Grey, XF-68 NATO Brown, X-19 Smoke, X-21 Flat Base, X-22 Clear. Weathering Master A, Weathering Master B, Weathering Master C, Weathering stick Mud.
GUNZE
Mr.Retarder, Mr.Metal Color 214 Dark Iron
HOBBY COLOR
H-20 Matt Acrylic Varnish
SIGNIFIER (http://signifer.chez-alice.fr/)
Artificial snow SN99001
Various oil colours, enamels and pastels from different manufacturers

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The Exclusive Club Edition Model has never been released by Airfix before and is only available through the Airfix Club. The kit comes with three pots of the new Humbrol acrylic paint and two decal options. You can build either the TD248 (Silver & Red) or TE199 (Black) version of the kit. Also through being a member of the Club you will get all the latest information about Airfix first and be able to enter competitions and win amazing prizes in the Airfix Club magazine. Being a member you are also entitled to special offers and discounts on magazine subscriptions.

The Airfix Club is available in two packages
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The Airfix Club is available outside the UK but only via the Downloadable Version, please see the website for more information.

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DRAGON BRING OUT THE BIG GUNS!

1:35 '39-'45 SERIES
GERMAN sFH 18 HOWITZER w/LIMBER
Smart Kit
DRAGON

Darren Thompson takes a look at One of Dragon's surprise releases. The ubiquitous 15cm Howitzer.

For a welcome change, Dragon's latest 1:35 offering isn't of a military vehicle, but of this rather fine & historically important artillery piece. The 150mm sFH 18 Howitzer, was used by the Germans on all fronts during WWII both as depicted here & also mounted on the Hummel self-propelled gun chassis.

This new Dragon kit uses brand-new moulds, rather than utilizing parts from the older Hummel gun, so is bang up-to-date in terms of detail and accuracy. Moulded in their familiar light-grey polystyrene, the kit comprises 233 parts, plus a further three in clear plastic, ten in Dragon's DS vinyl and four in etched metal. Also included are a turned aluminium barrel and a pair of tubular brass equilibrator sections. Good use has again been made of the slide moulding techniques, allowing some extremely fine, multi-faceted detail parts, such as the gun's trail arms and cradle, with rib and rivet details tucked into the tightest of corners.

In a break from the norm, the gun cradle is made up from an 'L' section and an 'I' section, with a bevelled edge along its joint line, this avoids having to remove the usual stubborn seam line down the centre of the finished cradle, good thinking here from Dragon.

The gun and breech area itself are very well detailed, individual parts allowing the breech to be modelled in the open or closed position, and the whole assembly is also able to elevate and recoil, just like the real thing. As mentioned above, a nicely turned aluminium barrel is supplied, although the lack of any rifling is quite obvious on such a large calibre weapon.

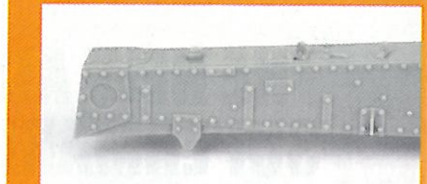
The lower gun base and suspension units are beautiful little models in themselves. The gun can either be built in the deployed or travelling position, utilizing the rear set of bogies, but once finished cannot be switched, as alternative parts are used for each scenario. The large artillery style wheels are moulded in a single piece, comprising of deep ribbed tyres and pierced, dished wheels, complete with detailed rim bolts and 'Continentau' logos. The back plates then provide the inner rim and brake drum detail

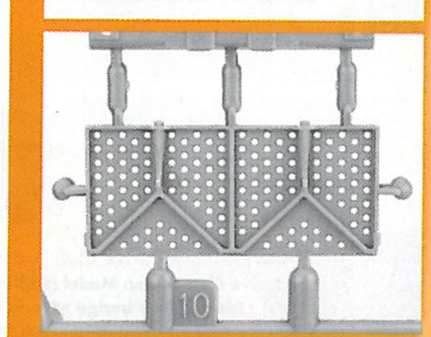
A sprue of plastic ammo is included, providing ten HE shells in two different styles, ten charge canisters and five caps. Added to this are four protective wicker ammo cases and two wicker mats, to prevent the gun from sinking into the mud whilst firing, a nice touch for the diorama builders. Both are made from Dragon's DS vinyl and really look the part.

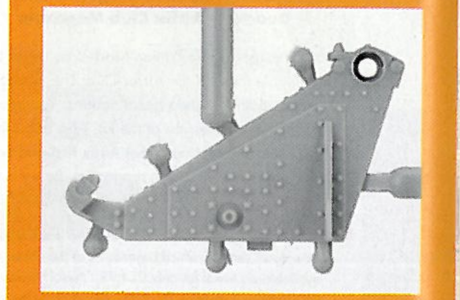
Painting scheme suggestions are straightforward Dark Grey or Dark Yellow, with a small decal sheet providing kill rings and limited stencilling, although no unit or theatre information is given. One thing I should point out here, as with some of Dragon's other recent releases, there are a few instruction bugs to watch out for, like parts miss-numbered, or oriented the wrong way around, so be sure to dry-fit the parts before reaching for the glue.

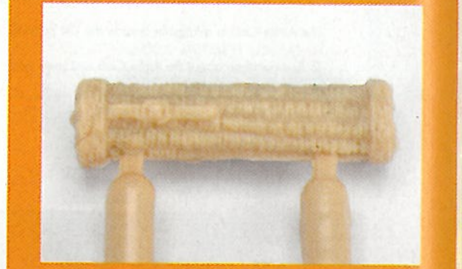
It's great to see Dragon producing some of the more important hardware that was used by the German Army in such vast numbers, in between the one-offs and 'Paper Panzers' they've been releasing of late. Personally, I love it, so top marks from me for Dragon's choice of subject. Now, at the risk of sounding greedy, what chance a new 8 tonne Half-Track to tow it, eh Dragon?!

A turned aluminium barrel and brass equilibrator tubes are included in the kit.









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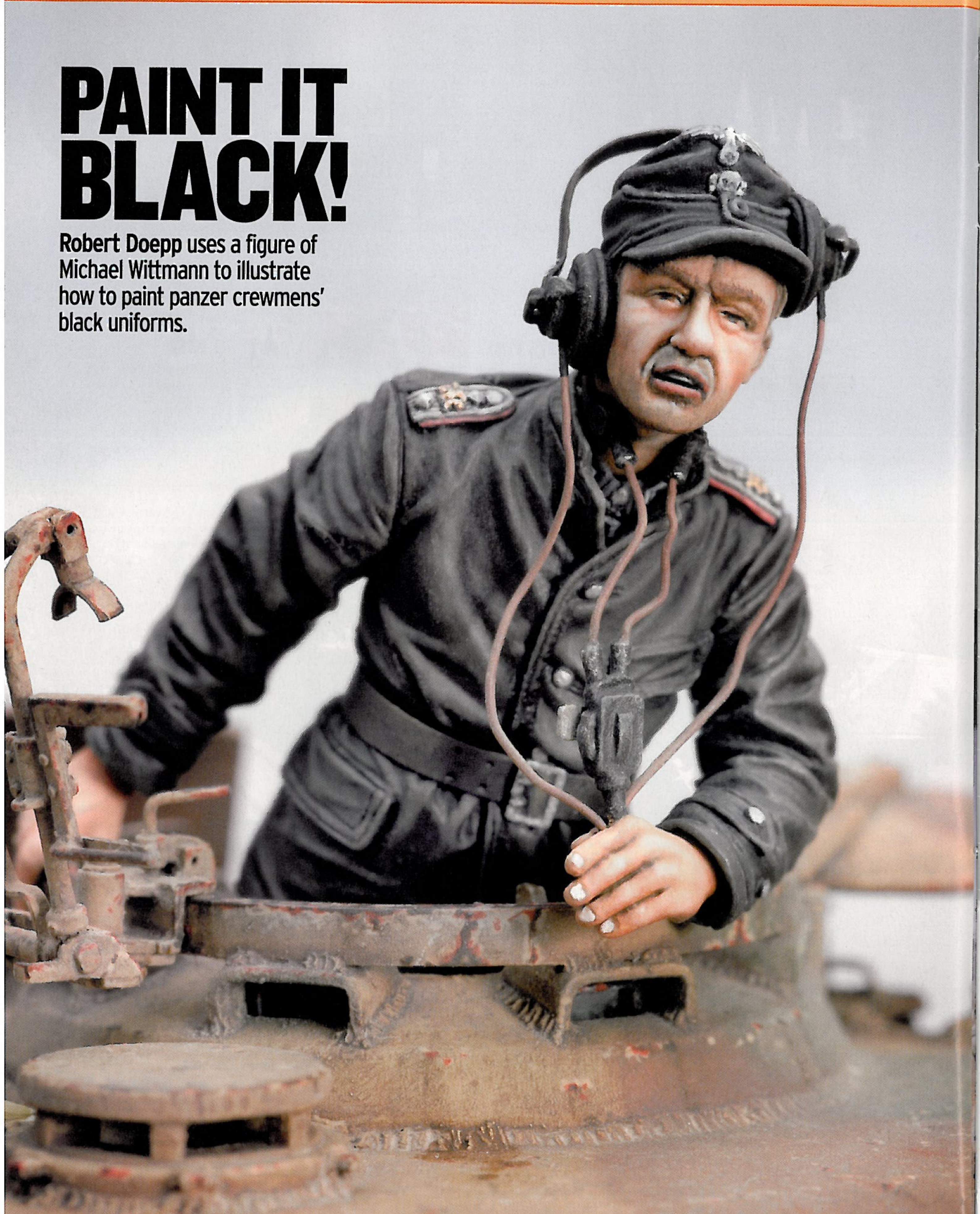
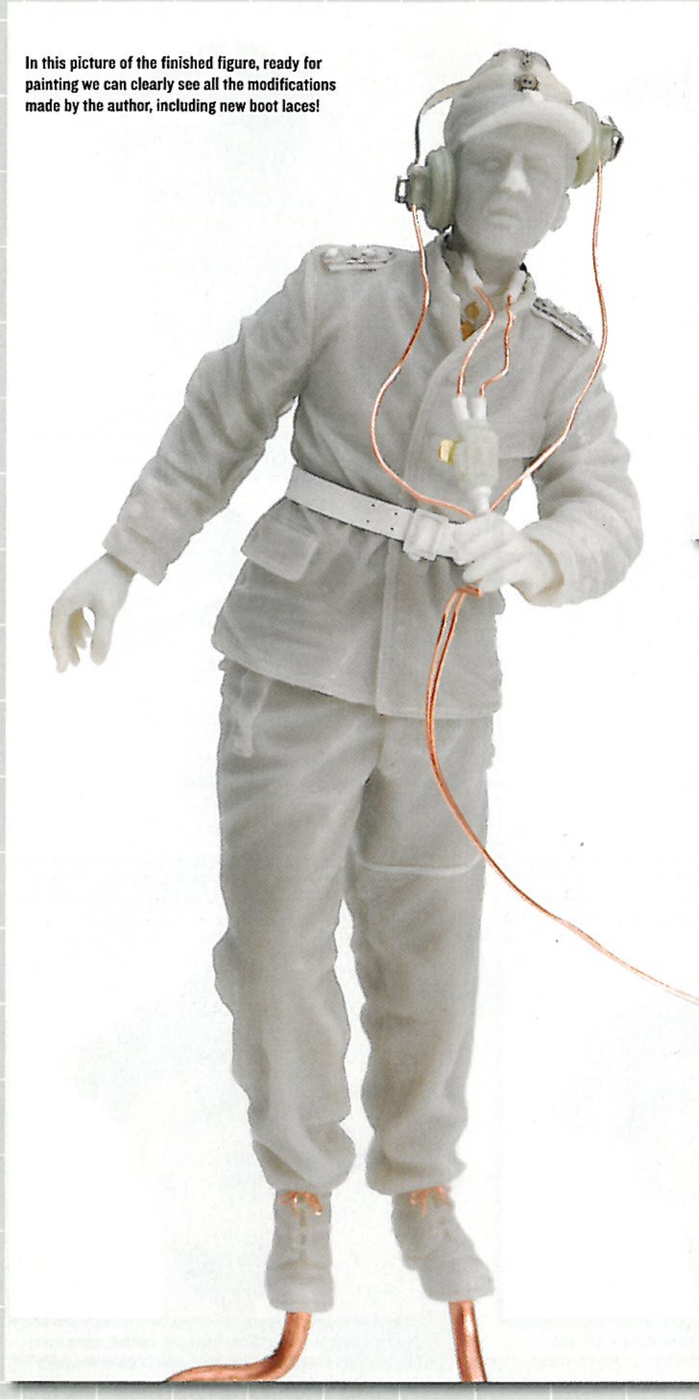
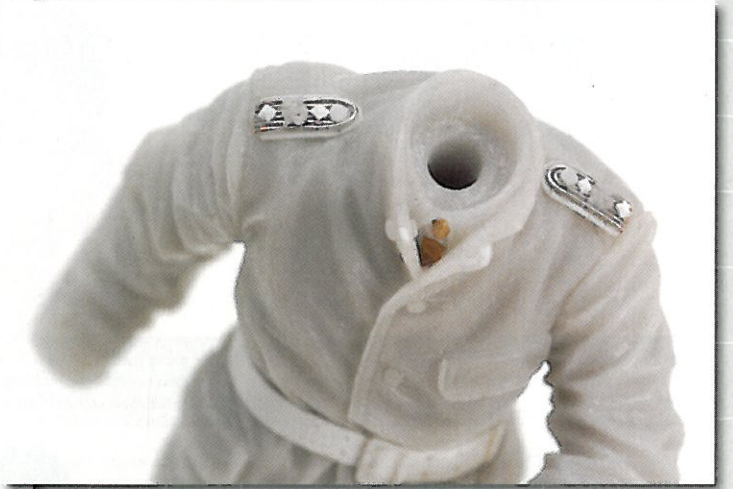
PAINT IT BLACK!

Robert Doepp uses a figure of Michael Wittmann to illustrate how to paint panzer crewmens' black uniforms.

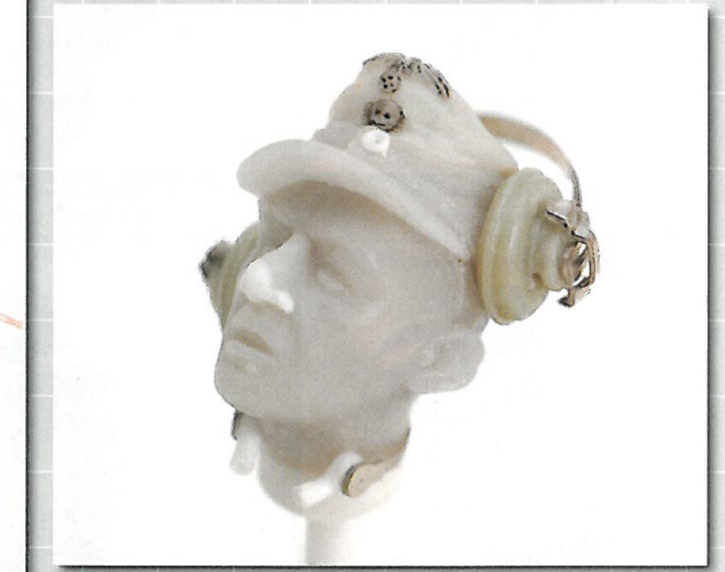




In this picture of the finished figure, ready for painting we can clearly see all the modifications made by the author, including new boot laces!



The rank tabs on Wittman's jacket had to be changed from the Unterscharführer as presented by Platoon, to Wittman's actual rank of Hauptsturmführer.



Here we can see where the figure's nose has been enlarged for a better likeness of Wittman. Note that the author has given the insignia a pin wash to see how the scratchbuilt detail stands out.

Whilst I was working on a Tiger that I planned to represent as Wittmann's '007' I came upon a newly released Pegaso Platoon figure, which at first sight appeared to me to be quite similar to Wittmann. So, I chose to use it as his representation although I knew that some changes would be necessary. This figure which is sculpted by Kwangyeol Lee is of outstanding quality as it combines extremely crisp detail with a convincingly dynamic posture. The conversion was a real challenge as my alterations had to reach at least the quality of the basic figure.

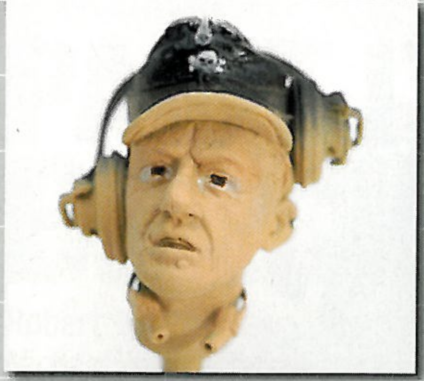
BUSINESS AS USUAL

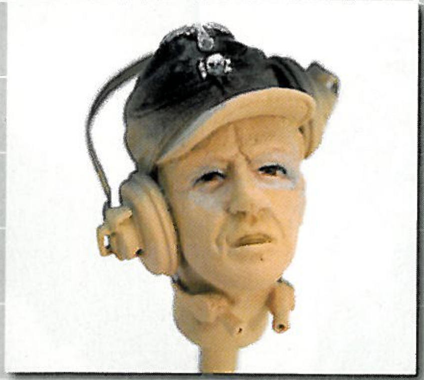
As a first step the resin parts had to be removed from the large casting blocks and cleaned up. It proved to be quite difficult to preserve all the detail. In particular I didn't manage to clean up the inner legs without ruining the double seams. After trying to rework them for quite a while I decided to cut off the left leg and refit it after repairing the damaged seams.

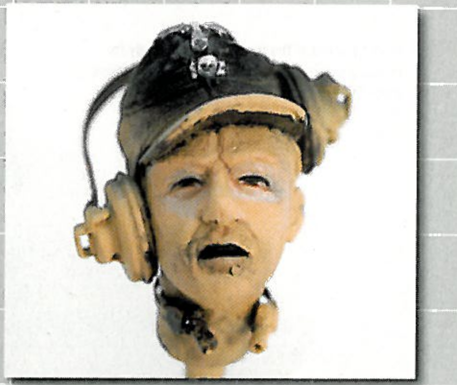
I used some Hornet hands instead of the original gloved ones as I was after adding a bit of contrast. It proved really helpful to hollow both sleeves and the collar, drill them and add some plastic rod to the hands and head. By doing this, not only were the transitions between skin and uniform parts perfectly hidden, but it was also possible for me to test fit all parts whilst keeping them slightly moveable. The latter proved necessary to ensure a perfect fit of the headset cables as I chose to use the highly detailed Royal Model item. Unfortunately, I discovered that the figure did not fit into the Dragon Tiger cupola (I also tried a Tamiya Panther cupola with the same result). This made it necessary to rework both knees rather extensively.

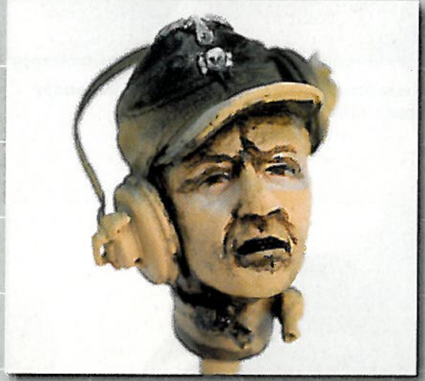
MAKING WITTMANN

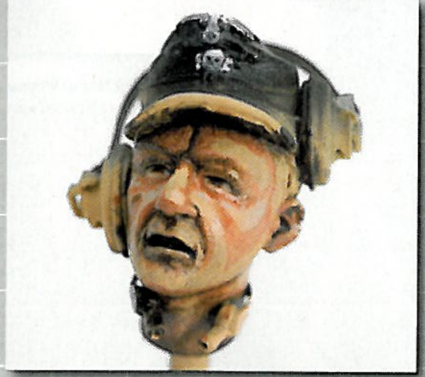
As the Platoon figure was originally meant to represent an 'Unterscharführer' it had to be changed into a 'Hauptsturmführer' by adding new epaulettes made from thin wire glued to small pieces of plastic strip. The LAH insignias were very carefully cut from the kit parts and glued to their newly made items along with some scratch built pips. The 'Ritterkreuz' (Knights Cross) with the 'Eichenlaub' (oak leaves) was taken from the Dragon Tiger kit (which includes a Wittmann figure) and the 'Schwerter' (swords), which Wittmann had already received ▶

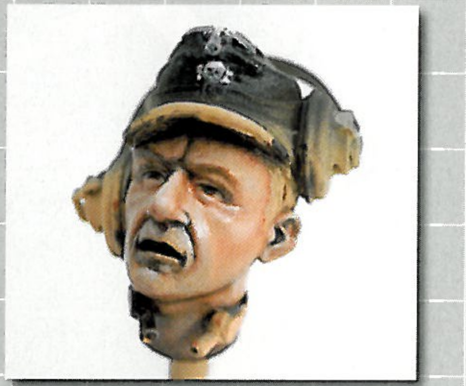

The first stage involves base coating the face in Tamiya Flat Flesh followed by painting the irises using oil paint.

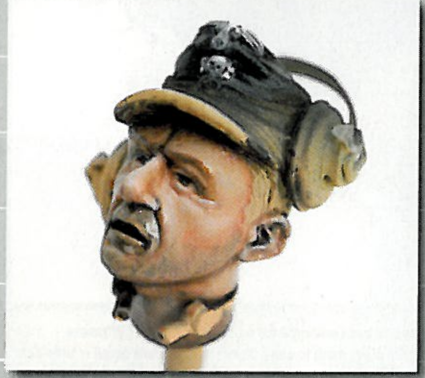

Once the oil paint had dried fully the eyes received a coat of semi-gloss acrylic. This was followed by adding the pupils and black to the upper eyelid and brown to the lower.

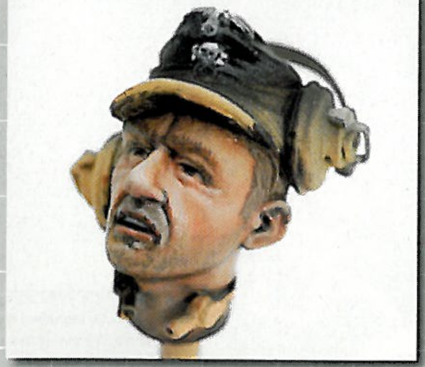

Flesh mixed from oil paints was then added around the eyes to neaten the edges of the black and brown used on the eyelids. Black has been added to the mouth at this stage.

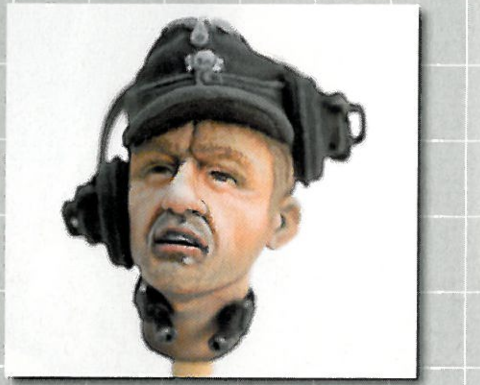

Once the oil paint around the eyes had dried fully a further coat of semi-gloss acrylic was applied to seal and protect the oil paints. Dark shadows have now been added.

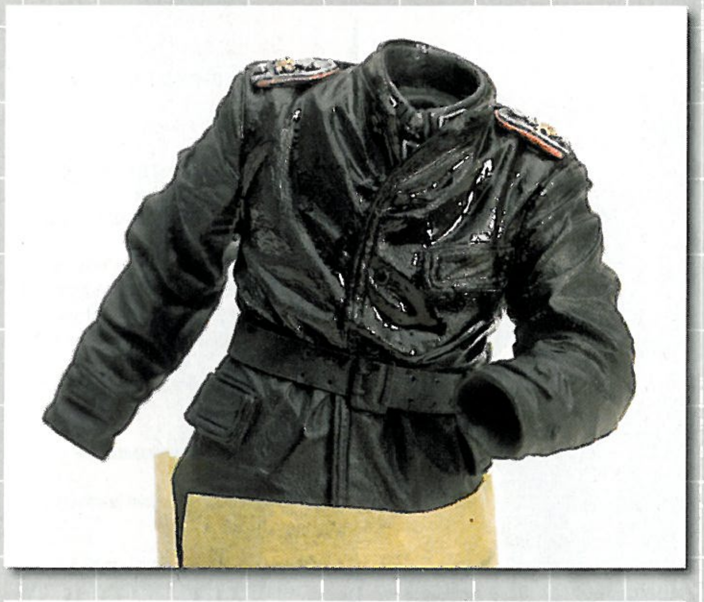

The basic light and dark skin tones have now been applied using oil paints mixed with linseed oil to lengthen the drying time. This allows for a smooth blending of the colours.


Here we can see how the highlights and shadow tones have been blended. The actual colours used are all listed within the main text.


The 'five o'clock shadow' has been stippled on using a mix of Mars Black, Raw Umber and Titanium White.

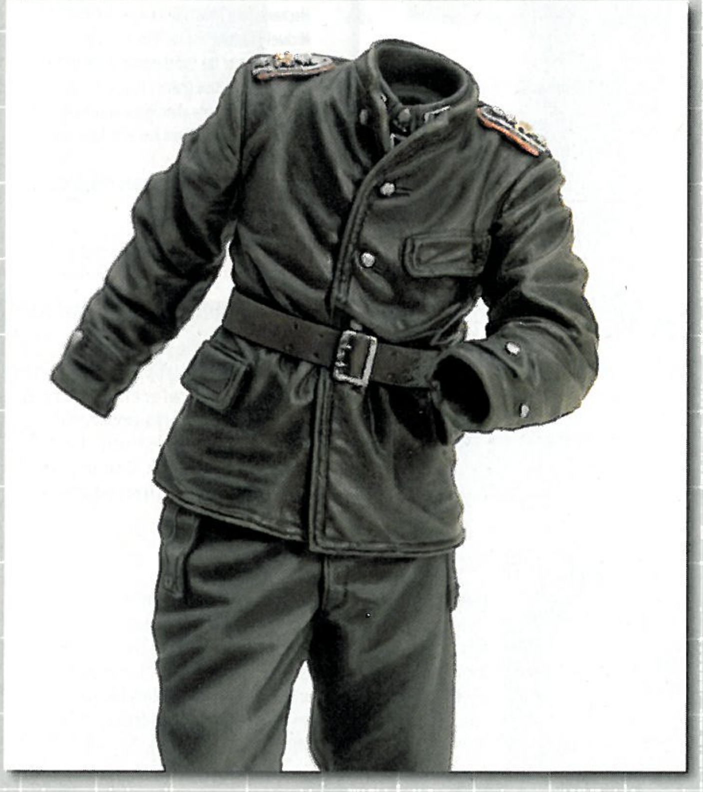

The final stages involved adding the teeth, lips, hair and eyebrows.


After the headphones and cap had been painted, again using oils, the entire head received a final coat of Daler Rowney's Soluble Matt Varnish.



Mars Black was used for the shadows, Naples yellow was added to the black to form the basic highlights. For the most exposed details and highest points of the creases more Naples yellow was added. Note the author has not used and white in these mixes and has preferred to use yellow.

The first stage of painting the uniform involved painting all of the details, such as the rank insignia, shirt and Knights Cross. The author found it easier to paint the detail first, seal it and then finally paint the



Here are all the colours required to make the skin tones used on the figure.

Once the oils had been blended to form the shadows and highlights everything was sealed in using Revell Matt Varnish, which actually leaves a semi-satin finish, perfect for simulating leather.

Mars Black, raw Umber and Titanium White were used to make the colour needed to add Witmann's five o'clock shadow .

◀ prior to commanding '007', were represented by extremely thin plastic rod. In addition, a new belt was made from plastic strip showing the typical buckle worn by German officers.

Wittmann did not wear the usual SS officers cap included in the kit. That is why I removed the top of the kit cap and made a new one from 'Magic Sculpt' which allowed me to remove the usual piping and also to move the SS eagle emblem from the caps side to its front whilst moving the skull downwards a little. Wittmann's cap also featured a narrower band at the front which was fastened with a single button, so I thinned the kit part and added a new button.

The most challenging job was trying to change the figure's face to Wittmann's characteristics. For this I mainly enlarged the nose by adding some putty, added a scar to his chin and sharpened the wrinkles on his forehead and on both sides of his nose.

PAINTING

Most people who paint figures start with the face - I am no different. Looking at the finished face helps me to get a kind of personal relationship with the figure and thus motivates my effort to proceed. In addition, particularly as it is the most challenging part of the figure, it feels good to have completed it at the start.

THE FACE

I started by applying a very thin basecoat of Humbrol Matt 01 before spraying the skin parts with Tamiya Flat Flesh XF-15. At the same time, the figure's body was sprayed black Tamiya X -1 along with the areas surrounding the insignia on the cap. After painting the whites of the eyes with Tamiya acrylics, the iris and cap insignia were the first things to be painted with oils. After drying completely, both were sealed with a semi-gloss mixture of Tamiya Flat Base X-21 and Clear X-22. This makes it possible to correct any later mistakes by removing it with white spirit. The pupil was added along with a thin black strip to the upper lid and a reddish-brown one to the lower. Both were corrected from the outside with a light skin tone (all of it mixed from oils) and again sealed after drying with acrylic varnish.

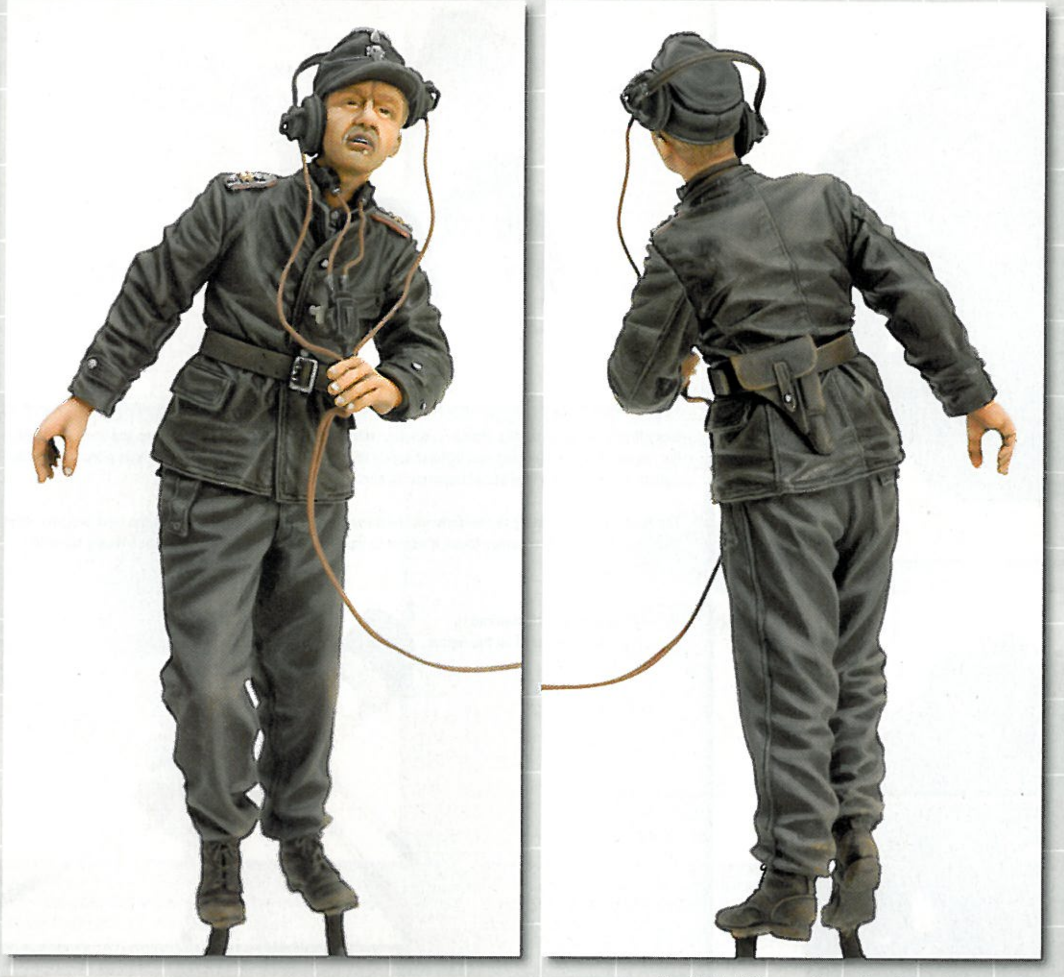
Afterwards, all the colour tones which would be needed for painting the face were mixed on a small palette made from plastic sheet and the whole face was painted wet-on-wet with linseed oil used as a medium to lengthen the drying time of the oil paint. By using this technique, one can achieve extremely smooth transitions between the differing colour tones by mixing them to an almost endless variety of shades.

I painted the insides of the headphones and the throat microphone with straight black as those areas are impossible to reach afterwards without ruining the flesh painted areas. The inside of the mouth was also painted with black and the excess was removed with white spirit. Afterwards, the first dark shadow was added, mixed from Natural Burnt Umber, Raw Umber, and Yellow Raw Ochre. For the following lighter shadow tone, I used a mix of Natural Burnt Sienna, Cadmium Red Middle, Naples Yellow Light, and Titanium White. By mixing brown and pinkish tones I can vary the basic skin tone depending for example on the season the figure is meant to be shown in or at least to my personal taste. When I added the next medium skin tone (mixed from the lighter shadow with additional Naples Yellow Light and Titanium White) I started to mix all colour tones until I was satisfied with the appearance of the light and shadow. Some highlights were added with more Titanium White added to the basic skin tone and finally some straight Titanium White. Where it seemed necessary, I used a small brush moistened with additional linseed oil to rework the transitions without adding more paint.

Now it was time to add some details. I started to dab on a 'five o'clock shadow' using varying mixes of Raw Umber, Mars Black, and Titanium White. The lips were painted with more Cadmium Red Middle added to the second shadow and highlighted with the lightest skin tone. Hair and eyebrows were first painted with the darkest shadow tone and then highlighted with straight Naples Yellow Light. The job was finished by matting everything down with Daler Rowney's Soluble Varnish Matt after the cap had been painted along with the headset.

UNIFORM

Just like the face, I started painting the uniform by adding the detail (except for the silver buttons). Doing it in this order makes it easier to reach a satisfying result on the detail as you do not have to worry about getting paint on the surrounding areas. After everything was dry and sealed with ▶



The finished Wittmann figure all ready to take charge of his Tiger I. Note the subtle tonal variations between the colours used for the leather jacket and cotton trousers.

Modelspec

Pegaso Models (PT-034) SS-Unterscharführer, Tank Crew 1944

Paints used

Tamiya acrylics: X-1 Black; X-21 Flat Base; X-22 Clear; XF-2 Flat White; XF-15 Flat Flesh
Humbrol enamels: Gloss 16 Gold; Gloss 191 Silver
Revell enamels: Matt 02; Gloss 01
Schmincke-Mussini oils: 231 Naples Yellow Light; 341 Cadmium Red Middle; 656 Yellow Raw Ochre; 661 Natural; Burnt Sienna; 666 Natural Burnt Umber
Scheveningen Classic oils: A 69 Raw Umber; A 370 Mars Black
Lukas 1862 oils: 0008 Titanium White

Accessories

Dragon (6253) Tiger I Late Production 3in1
Hornet Hands 01, Hands 02
Royal Model (217) German Tanker Headphones

References

Michael Wittmann and the Waffen SS Tiger Commanders of the Leibstandarte in WW II (Vol I), Mechanicsburg 2006 (Patrick Agte) 0-8117-3334-3
Michael Wittmann and the Waffen SS Tiger Commanders of the Leibstandarte in WW II (Vol II), Mechanicsburg 2006 (Patrick Agte) 0-8117-3335-1
Tiger. Die Geschichte einer legendären Waffe 1942-45, Stuttgart 6/1993 (Egon Kleine/Volkmar Kühn) ISBN 3-87943-414-X
Tigers in Combat, Vol. II, Winnipeg 1998 (Wolfgang Schneider) ISBN 0-921991-39-8

Acknowledgements

I would like to thank Paul Alderton for providing me with some of the reference material on Wittmann and answering many of my questions. I would also like to thank Calvin Tan for his tips on treating black leather parts.

This figure was completed to go in a Tiger I '007'. The full build article on this vehicle will appear in Tamiya Model Magazine 148 (Feb 2008).

MEET THE AUTHOR

I was born in 1966. After a lot of modelling in my youth I quit to take care of some whiskey and women. I managed to pick up this wonderful hobby again at the age of about thirty I guess. I concentrate almost exclusively on German WW II armour. Some of you might know my work from the Tamiya Model Magazine International to which I am just as proud to contribute as to Military Modelling International. ■

◀ acrylic varnish the leather jacket was painted. I started by painting all shadow areas with straight Mars Black. After this, a first highlight was applied by adding Naples Yellow Light to the black and brushing this onto areas where the light will hit. After painting the most exposed details with the lightest tone mixed by adding more Naples Yellow Light, everything was again reworked with a brush moistened with linseed oil. It is not a good idea to paint the whole jacket in one go, but rather to work on small areas at a time. In this example, I painted the upper body from the belt up first, followed by the left arm during one evening. The next day, the area below the belt was painted along with the right arm.

The end result became more apparent after the jacket was sealed with Revell Matt 02 which provides a semi-satin appearance. Additional depth was reached by applying some slightly more shiny varnish to the deeper areas. To add a little variation, I used different tones for the highlights on the belt, holster, and shoes. Natural Burnt Sienna, Yellow Raw Ochre, and Naples Yellow Light were used on them to create a slightly reddish appearance. To make the differing materials apparent I used harsher contrasts on the fabric parts and mixed the highlights on them from Yellow Raw Ochre and Titanium White instead. This effect was enhanced by preserving a slight sheen on the leather parts whereas the fabric areas were made completely flat with Daler Rowney's Soluble Varnish Matt.

CONCLUSION

Painting an overall black uniformed figure is on the one hand rather simple as I needed less colour tones to highlight it - in fact every fold had to be kept straight black or the clothing would not have appeared as being black anymore. But, on the other hand, it was quite difficult to get a realistic result as I had to use very subtle contrasts. That is why painting black uniforms makes me concentrate on minute differences and subtle contrasts. At the same time, a black uniform creates high contrasts compared to the flesh areas and insignia, which made me work even harder on these too. Hopefully, both aspects of my figure painting skills have benefited. ■

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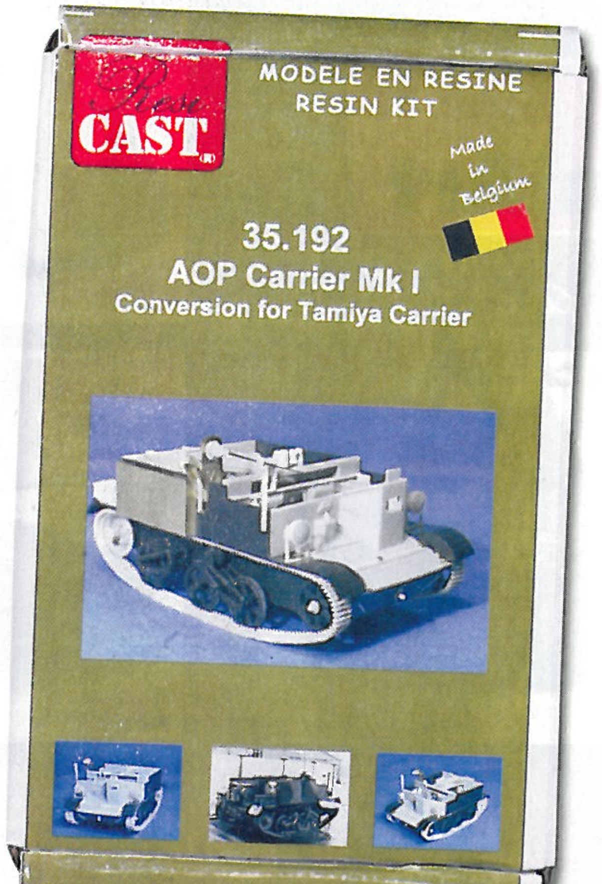
AOP IS AOK

Ian McGonagle sings the praises of Resicast's latest 'Bren Carrier' conversion.



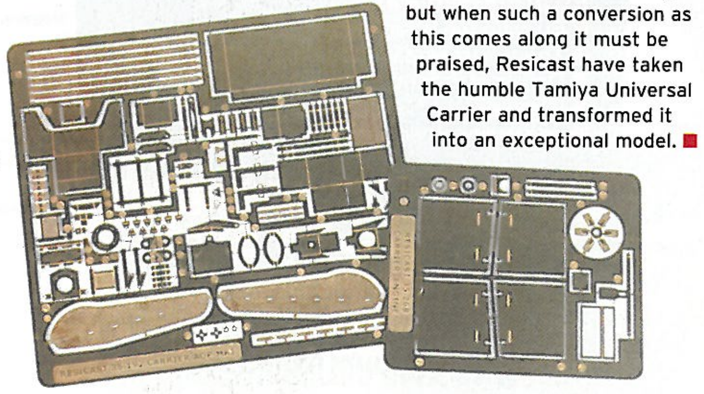
This Resicast AOP Carrier is a serious conversion set for Tamiya's Universal Carrier; it's such a major conversion that you will only use the bare bones of the donor kit. Apart from the bathtub and the wheels, the rest of the Tamiya kit will be assigned to the spares box.

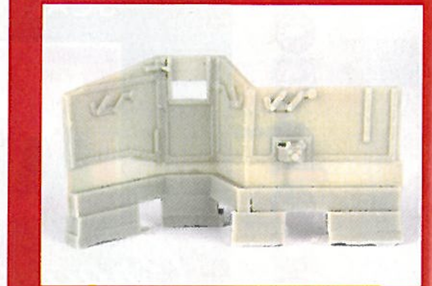
Enclosed within the box are seven sealed bags of resin parts along with four further bags, three containing two brass frets and a selection of plastic rod, the last bag contains a set of white-metal tracks.

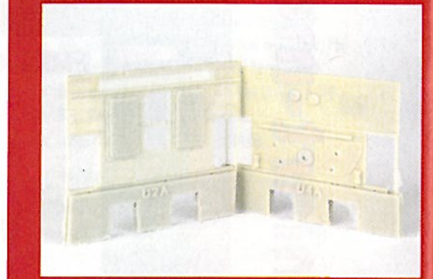
The instructions begin with a comprehensive three page listing of all the parts enclosed within the kit, and then proceed to take you through the conversion step by step in the standard Resicast manner with clear black and white photographs of a kit being built and individual marker arrows showing where each part locates on the assembly. One of the key elements of this kit is a beautifully detailed Ford V8 engine and Resicast have included separate engine compartment panels to allow the engine to be shown off on the finished model. Likewise, the attention to detail shown within the crew compartment is also every bit as good as the detail incorporated on the exterior castings. Further praise must be given for the driver's compartment which is full of detailed driving and steering controls. The amount of detail within the two rear compartments is to an equally high standard, with the radio set being of particular note. D handles and minor, but nevertheless important detail is all afforded the same amount of attention in its replication - outstanding! The only problem I can see is how you best paint and weather it in-situ. Careful thought must be taken during assembly as to position and accessibility of the finished items within the vehicle.

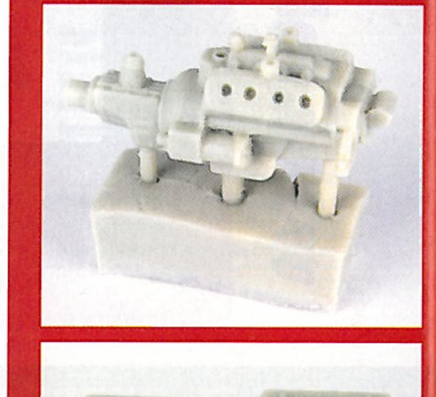
The exterior displays the same attention to detail but not being a rivet counter, I cannot say that every rivet, nut, bolt and fastener is the correct size or in the correct position but one thing is certain, it looks right in the grand scale of the vehicle. Three areas stand out for me on the exterior, one is the complex assembly of the aerial, with ten component parts it's more than just a twig sticking out of the side of the vehicle. The second is the uncluttered front of the carrier; this does help to show the detail of the front plate that protects the driver from small arms fire. Third is the rear of the vehicle, this area is cluttered with communication wire, the jack and other boxes and stowage areas. The only thing I could see missing from the whole vehicle is the rear view mirror for the driver; this however can be easily remedied.

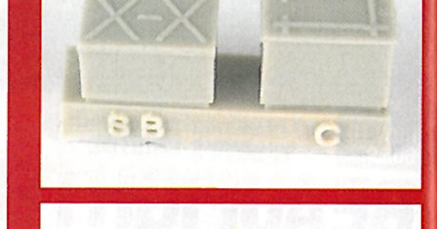
Any kit or conversion that extends the Allied modeller's collection is a welcome thing, but when such a conversion as this comes along it must be praised, Resicast have taken the humble Tamiya Universal Carrier and transformed it into an exceptional model. ■

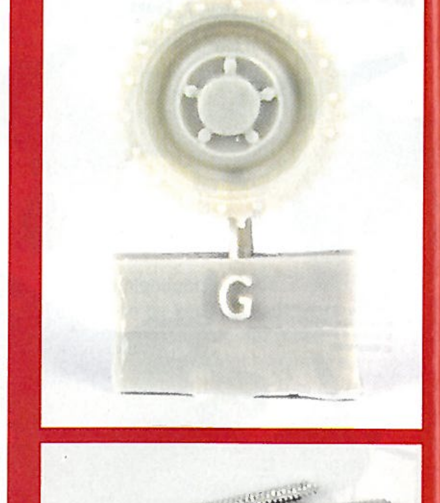












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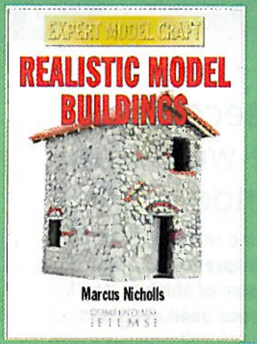

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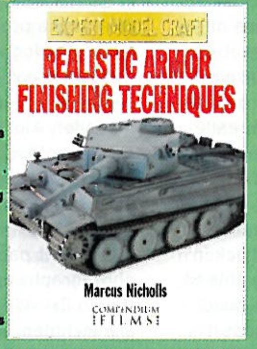

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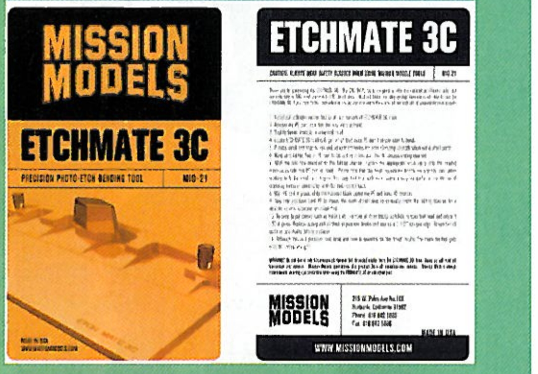

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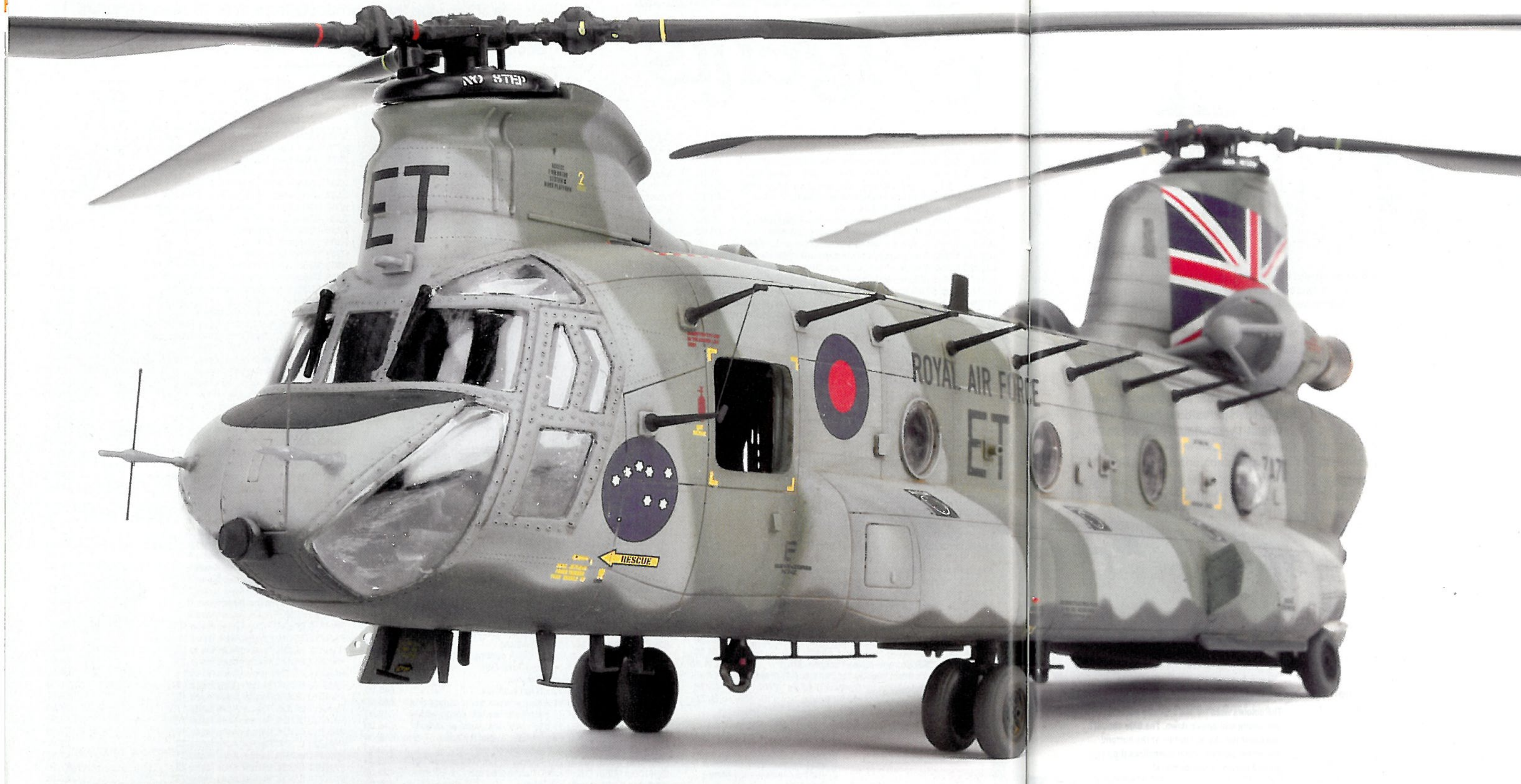


HYDRAULIC PALM TREE

The Editor builds Italeri's second outing of the quarter scale wind generator - the CH-47 Chinook.

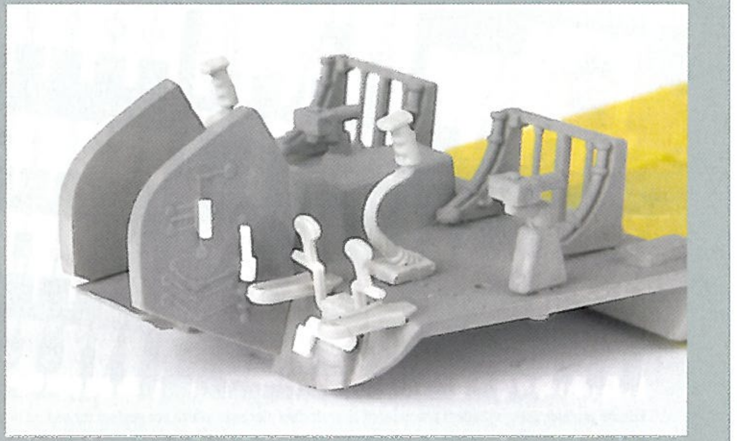
Having started, but not been able to finish Trumpeter's huge 1:35 CH-47A (given up waiting for replacement parts), I still had the bug to build one of my favourite helicopters. When Italeri released the ACH-47A Gunship I was really tempted, firstly because the Gunship Chinook looks really cool and secondly, being in 1:48 would make it smaller and thus more manageable to build. The problem I had was that Paul Egerton had previewed it back in issue 07 and I hadn't been able to prise it out of his hands to build! Thankfully, I got a tip off that it was to be followed by an RAF HC.1 so I thought I would hang on and do this one instead. Anyway I hate seeing a grown man cry!

On receiving the kit, I couldn't help but be impressed by the box art and the size of the box itself. The box top has been designed in such a way that it opens up to reveal a poster of the box art minus the logo and writing; I think this is a great idea which will certainly appeal to the younger modeller. Along with a stack of sprues holding the kit parts, Italeri have included one of their very useful photographic reference manuals, in this case it contains forty eight pages of colour photographs and line drawing of an Italian CH-47C. Six decal options are included, one for an Australian, Canadian, Italian and US Army aircraft and two RAF ones, these are supplied on a huge sheet that only just fits in the box.

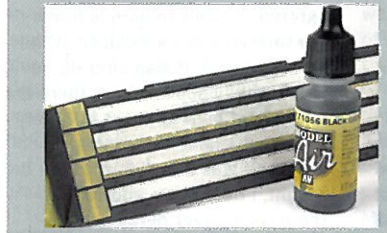
GETTING STARTED

As with most aircraft, construction starts with the interior and Italeri's Chinook is no different. The way the interior goes together is almost identical to that of the Academy Sea Knight which I built and described in Issue 18. One thing I did learn from building the CH-46 was that going to town on the interior super-detailing was a bit of a waste of time as hardly anything would be visible on the finished model. With that in mind, I only added some wiring in the avionics rack and some plastic strip and rod to the cockpit. Interestingly, the avionics rack and cabin heater compartments either side of the cockpit walkway are actually 'quilted' over with sound proofing on RAF Chinooks. I decided I wanted this to be a quick build and not get too bogged down and find this model taking as long as my last helicopter or worse, never getting finished.

The one area I couldn't ignore detailing was the rear of the cabin and ramp as these would all be visible on the finished model. Most noticeable was that the Auxiliary Power Unit (APU) and bottom of the rotor gearbox are missing completely. These items really need to be added to fill the void when looking up into the rear pylon. Again, I believe that on the RAF variants, these are panelled over, but I actually fancied just adding a bit of detail in the form of parts from a Tamiya GMC truck axle assembly. OK it might not be 100% accurate but it looks a damn sight better than nothing at all - if a bit of modelling 'gizmology' is good enough for one of my modelling heroes, Shep Paine, then it's good enough for me! ▶



Extra detailing was kept to a minimum, the author learnt this from 'going to town' on the Academy Sea Knight only for it to all disappear once the nose section was fitted in place.

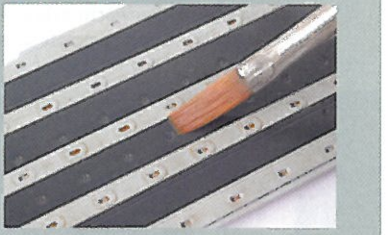


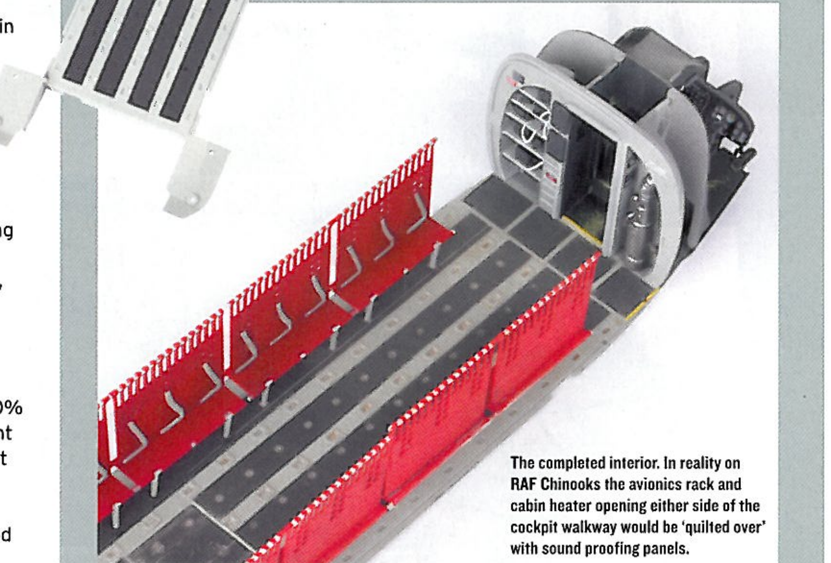
The cabin anti-slip flooring was first painted in Vallejo Model Air Black Grey before masking off using Cammett's new Micro Tape in preparation for applying the light grey.

Xtracrylix Light Gull Grey XA 1137 was used for the interior of the cabin.

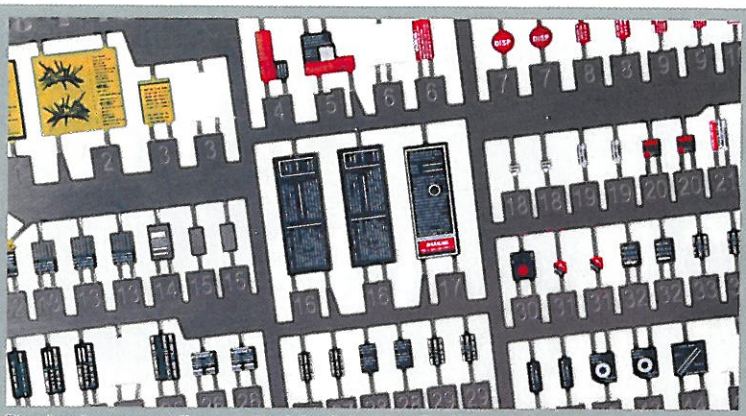
The basic interior painting is now complete. Detail painting and weathering are to follow.

The first stage of weathering consisted of a wash using Mig Productions Tan Filter. As can be seen in the photo below this collect around all details.

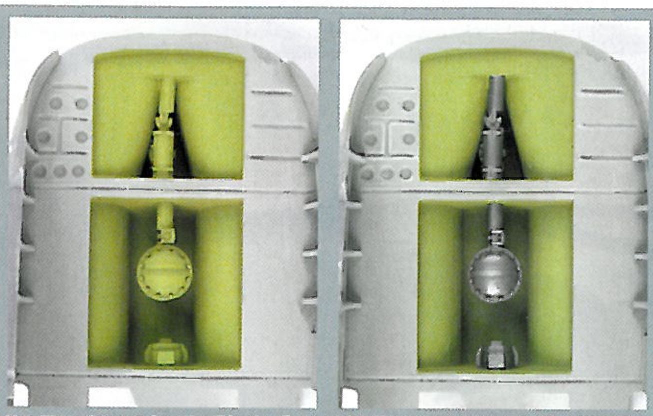




The completed interior. In reality on RAF Chinooks the avionics rack and cabin heater opening either side of the cockpit walkway would be 'quilted over' with sound proofing panels.



Eduard produce some excellent pre-painted aircraft data placards, which are perfect for adding to the interior for that extra touch of realism.



Italeri haven't included any detail for the aft rotor pylon. This area is visible when viewed from the rear ramp. Some gizmology was used in the form of an axle from a Tamiya GMC Truck to replicate the base of the rotor gearbox and auxiliary power unit APU.

EXTERIOR

The first thing to do was to fix the two halves of the fuselage together using a combination of Liquid Poly for the underside and Cyano for the top, plus half a roll of masking tape to hold it all in place while the glue set. I found the best method was to start at the cockpit and work backwards using lots of masking tape until the glues had set. Interestingly, for the glazed areas I tried Bob Smith Industries, Odourless, Gap Filling glue. This Cyano has been specifically formulated not to fog clear plastic and I must say it worked perfectly. This glue offered a much stronger bond than using PVA which is my traditional method.

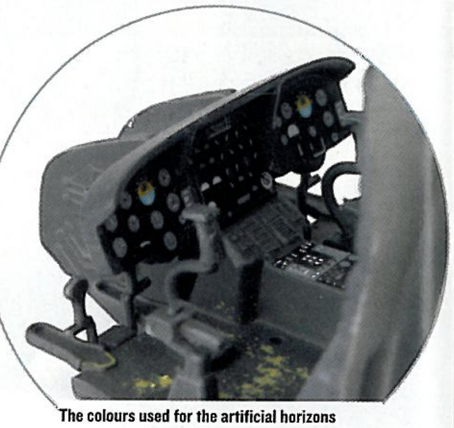
With the fuselage in one piece, I set about adding some minor details using the excellent WWP book 'Chinook in Detail'. This book was in my opinion worth every penny as it offered complete walk rounds of both the interior and exterior. A point to note is that the reference book included in the kit featured an Italian aircraft, so wasn't really applicable as there are a lot of detail differences between the Italian and RAF variants.

When I was detailing the Sea Knight, I decided to add all of the missing rivet detail using a pyrogravure tool, well it seemed a good idea at the time. I must admit it was very time consuming and if I'm honest, probably over-scale, but I still thought it looked better than them not being there at all. Thankfully since building the Sea Knight, we received the Nietrad Riveter, supplied by Cammett (Incoming Aug 07), which has been designed for just this task. By simply 'wheeling' it over the surface, very neat lines of tiny rivets were produced quickly and much more 'in-scale' than the pyrogravure method. Having said that, I did use the 'pyro' to add the rivet detail to the cockpit framing which had been sanded off whilst getting the glazed nose section to fit flush with the fuselage.

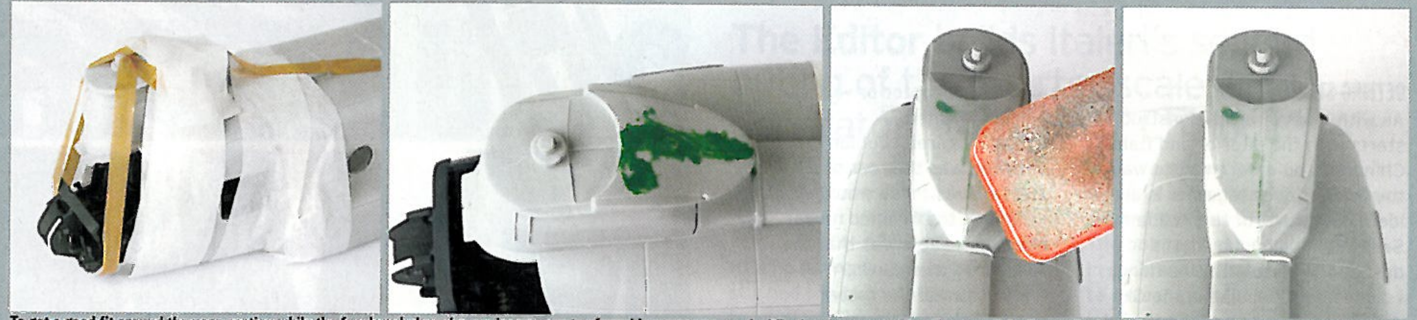
Once all the rivet detail had been added, it was time to add the smaller fixtures and fittings including all the antennae and aerials. This is another problem area as the instructions are contradictory and wrong! For the RAF variants, it shows part 7E, a large circular housing fitted to the bottom of the fuselage, this part is not fitted to RAF Chinooks, whilst on the decal options drawings, it shows the 'tear drop' shaped fairing fitted to all of the aircraft in the decal options, again the instructions shouldn't be believed here.

One other aspect I felt could do with a bit of extra detailing was the multitude of grilles. The moulded detail was pretty poor, certainly not good enough to get away with, even with carefully painting. I felt the best thing to do, without hacking the kit apart, was to fix etched brass mesh parts over the top of the moulded openings using a combination of Accurate Armour and Aber brass mesh that I had in the spares box.

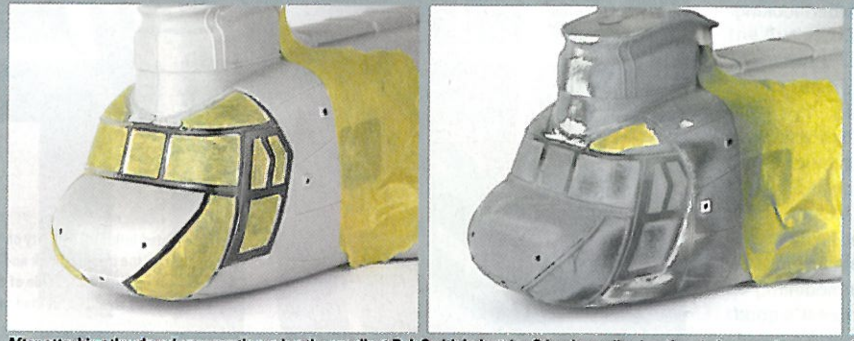
Whilst I was adding new mesh to the grilles on the fuselage, I decided to replace the nylon mesh supplied to fit into the intake filters with fine brass mesh. Thankfully, Italeri supply some scale templates on the instruction sheet which were cut out and taped onto the brass then the etch was trimmed to shape. The new mesh parts were then fitted into the conical frames with the aid of a Mission Models Multi-Tool, before fixing in place with more of Bob Smith Industries, Cyano glue.



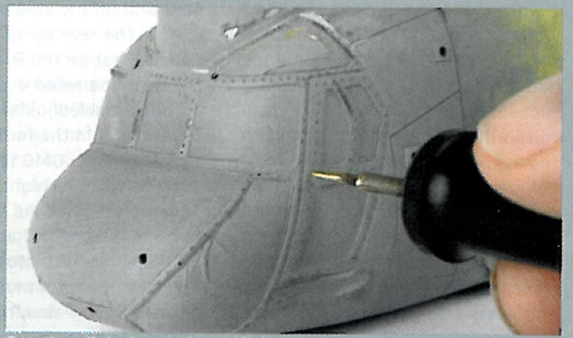
The colours used for the artificial horizons are wrong and upside down. The blue should represent the sky and not be at the bottom! The yellow portion which symbolizes the ground should in fact be black!



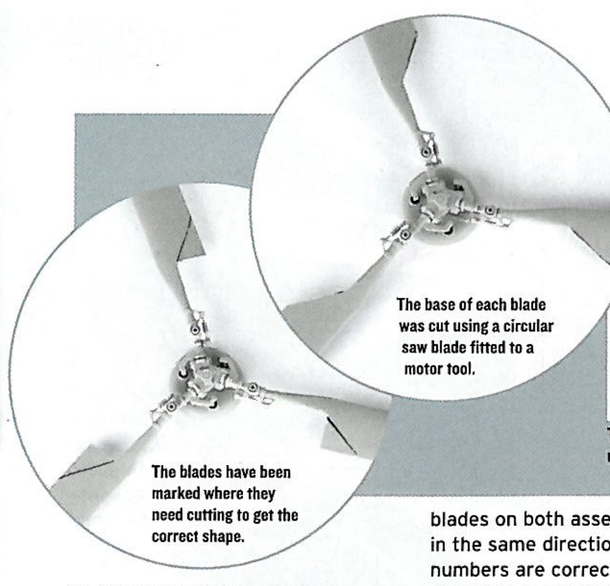
To get a good fit around the nose section while the fuselage halves dry, copious amounts of masking tape was used while the glue was setting. The top of the forward pylon did require some filling along the join and a sink mark. Squadron's Green Stuff putty was used to fill the marks and Master Casters sticks were used to sand the putty down for a perfect finish.



After attaching the glazed nose section using the excellent Bob Smith Industries Odourless adhesive, the window panels were masked off before applying a coat of grey primer, which instantly highlights any areas which require some filling and sanding.

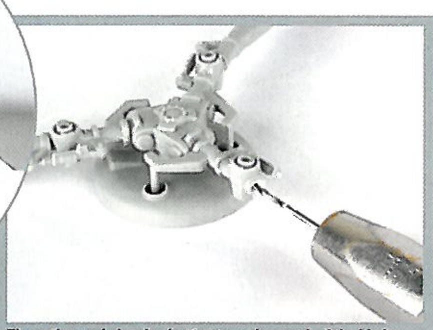


Once the cockpit glazing had been filled and blended with the fuselage, the rivet detail which had been lost doing this was reinstated using a pyrogravure tool.

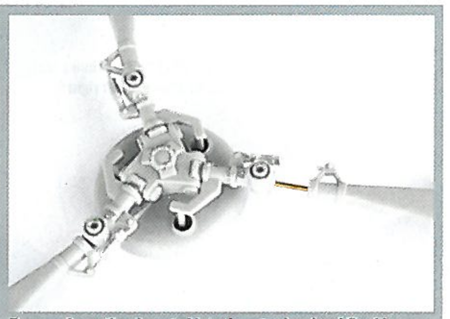


The base of each blade was cut using a circular saw blade fitted to a motor tool.

The blades have been marked where they need cutting to get the correct shape.



The author ended up having to strengthen each of the blade mountings by drilling holes in both the blade and rotor head.



Brass rod was then inserted into the rotor head and fixed in place using cyano adhesive. The blade was then slid onto the brass rod offering a much stronger join.

While I'm pointing out the faults, the Chaff and Flare dispenser housings fitted to each side of the fuselage are shown mounted upside down, the top edge of these boxes should be angled upwards, not down. As these parts have been shaped to fit facing down, the surfaces that mates with the fuselage will need to be re-profiled for them to fit flush against the sponsons.

ROTORS

The rotor assemblies are nicely detailed but there are a couple of problems. Firstly, the instructions have been drawn showing the blades on both assemblies facing in the same direction! The part numbers are correct for each set but there is definitely room for confusion during this stage.

The second problem is more serious and does involve some surgery. The base of each blade has been moulded 'squared off' where it joins the rotor head, this part of the blade should in fact be tapered. This wasn't a real problem to correct. I first drew on the correct angle (about 45 degrees looked right to me). For speed, I used a circular saw blade fitted into a mini drill to remove the excess plastic before finally cleaning up using a selection of Master Caster's sanding sticks.

During the construction and painting of the rotor assemblies, I managed to break off every one of the blades. At first I thought it was me being clumsy but after the first couple broke off I realised the arms that attach each blade to the head just can't seem to handle the weight. I do realise that I may have weakened these parts during the cutting and sanding mentioned above. Well, whatever the reason, I would have to repair them and to do this I decided the best course of action was to drill and pin them. This involved drilling holes in both the end of the blade and rotor head arm using a pin vice. When I was satisfied that I had drilled far enough into each part, I inserted a length of brass rod dipped in Cyano glue into the head and end and then simply pushed the blade onto the protruding brass rod. I ended up repeating this process six times, but at least I knew they wouldn't break again!

PAINTING

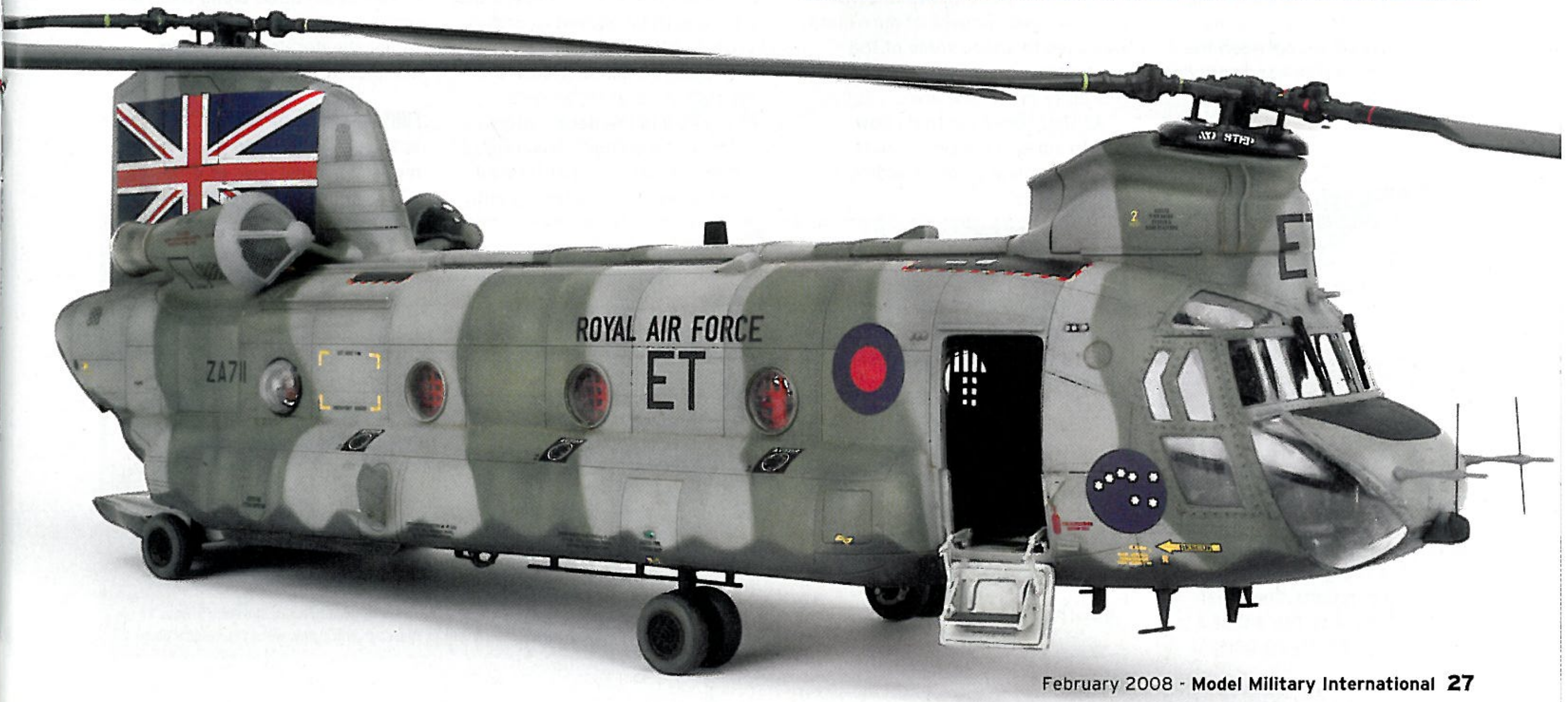
With all of the glazing and openings well and truly masked off it was time to put on an initial coat of grey primer. This instantly highlighted the areas that required some extra work, i.e. filling and sanding. The second thing it did was to show off to great effect all of the rivet lines I had added using the Riveter from Cammett.

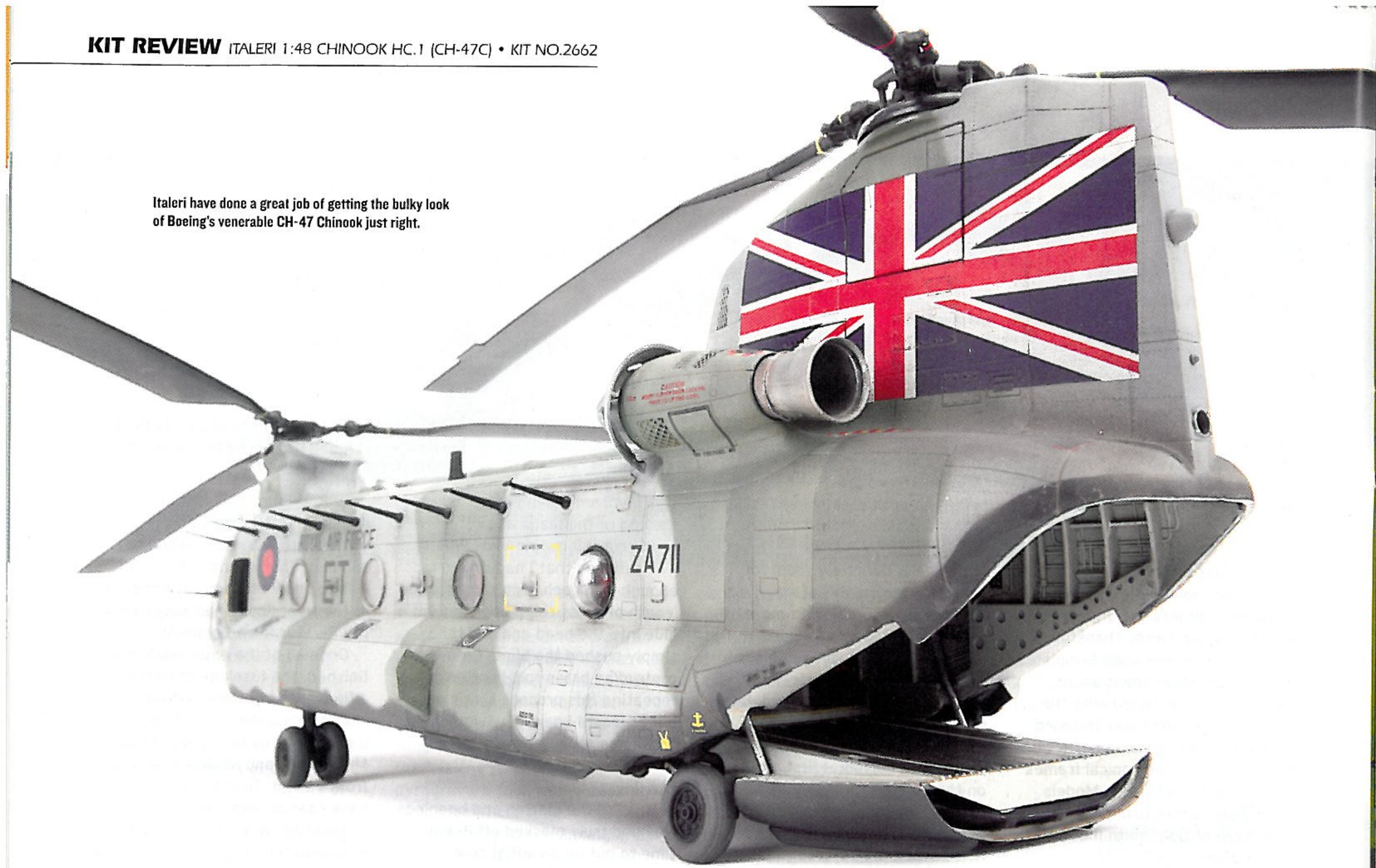
Once all of the extra work was finished, the fuselage received a final coat of primer before commencing the camouflage painting. As usual, I opted to use ModelColor and ModelAir acrylics from Vallejo. To start with, a base coat of Dark Sea Grey was airbrushed on using an Iwata HP-C Plus with the air pressure set at ▶

bsi
BOB SMITH INDUSTRIES
INSTA-CURE+
INSTA-SET
SUPER-GOLD+
INSTA-FLEX+

Tech Tip!

Bob Smith Industries Odourless Gap Filling 'super glue' was used to fix the large glazed nose without fear of it 'fogging'. Bob Smith glues are distributed in the UK Horizon Hobbies, and available from good hobby shops..





Italeri have done a great job of getting the bulky look of Boeing's venerable CH-47 Chinook just right.

◀ about 25 psi. Once I was happy I had an even coat, I set about masking off individual panels and then misting in mixtures of medium Sea Grey and Light Grey to add some visual interest. As can be seen from the accompanying photos, the idea was to fade the rear of each panel. Initially this can look a bit 'contrasty' and unrealistic, but by the time a gloss coat, decals, weathering and a matt coat have been applied it will have toned down considerably.

The next step was to apply the broad bands of Dark Green. First of all, thin sausages of White-Tack were rolled-out and laid over the model. This method gives a much tighter demarcation between the colours than my free hand spraying could ever achieve!

To get the look I was after the green received some pre-shading first, followed by the same 'faded panel' technique used on the grey.

The last colour to be applied was the black for the undersides; this was pretty time consuming to add thanks to the wavy edge around the bottom of the fuselage. Again, I broke out the White-Tack and rolled this into a very long sausage before carefully shaping it around the bottom edge to form the distinctive wave pattern. Instead of spraying on pure black I actually used Black/Grey as this colour looks less toy-like than using just black. A small amount of pure black was used to shade some of the panels to add a bit of contrast to this large monotone area.

All that remained to do now was to spray a couple of coats of Johnsons Klear prior to adding all those decals!

DECALS

For us armour modellers, applying large amounts of waterslide decals to a model can be a bit unnerving as it isn't something we need to do on most vehicles. However, by ensuring the decals are going to be applied to a smooth gloss coat and with the aid of some good quality setting solutions there shouldn't be any problems. Having said that, I did manage to pick the aircraft which displayed by far the most markings, including three huge Union Jack flags that would certainly test my theory.

As each decal was being soaked from its backing sheet, I coated the area it was to be applied to with Microscale's Micro Set solution. Using this in conjunction with a gloss coat ensures no air gets trapped behind the decal, which can cause the dreaded 'silvering'. Once the decals had been coaxed into place and gently pressed onto the surface using a combination of cotton buds and a piece of kitchen towel, I coated them in Daco's superb strong setting solution using a brush. This solution softens the decal and pulls it down tight onto the surface and into panel lines and around protruding details. Just remember not to touch the decal while this is happening as it will be so soft it could be damaged very easily. Because some of the panel lines in this kit were so deep, the decals couldn't be pulled down far enough to reach the bottom of these 'trenches' without some extra help, I ended up having to run a scalpel blade along them and re-apply some more Daco solution to get the decals to pull down completely.

FINISHING OFF

With all the decals in place the model was then matted down with a couple of coats of Vallejo ModelAir Matt Varnish. The next stage is always the most nerve wracking, and that's removing all the masking from the glazing, especially after I had ruined a 1:72 MH-53 by not masking an opening correctly and thereby managed to get overspray on the inside of the cockpit glazing!

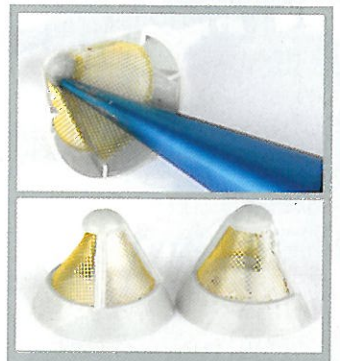
Once I was happy I hadn't repeated this mistake, it was a case of adding all the 'sticky out bits' (my technical term for the remaining aerials, cargo hooks, crew door and undercarriage).

With all this lot in place the Chinook really came to life and I felt pretty pleased with myself how my second helicopter had turned out.

CONCLUSION

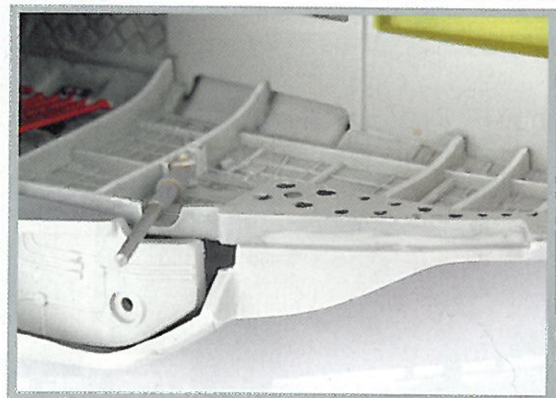
I really enjoyed building the Chinook and benefited from building the Sea Knight back in issue 16. Even so, I still learnt a lot more whilst building this, my second 'chopper'. Italeri must be commended for producing some great modelling subjects. There are however, some minor problems with this one - the quilt liners missing from the avionics rack and cabin heater openings on the forward bulkhead, the shape of the rotor blades and some incorrect aerial positions and fitments for some of the decal options included.

The clever way the cabin interior is assembled does take away a lot of the stress in trying to figure out what bits should and shouldn't be painted prior to assembly. I know it has probably come across that this model is full of faults, but to be honest, none are really that major and all have been easy to correct using basic modelling skills. Most importantly, I have another impressive helicopter to add to my small, but growing collection. Recommended. ■

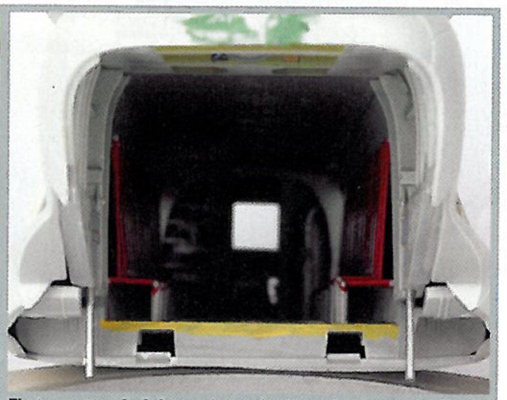


Tech Tip!

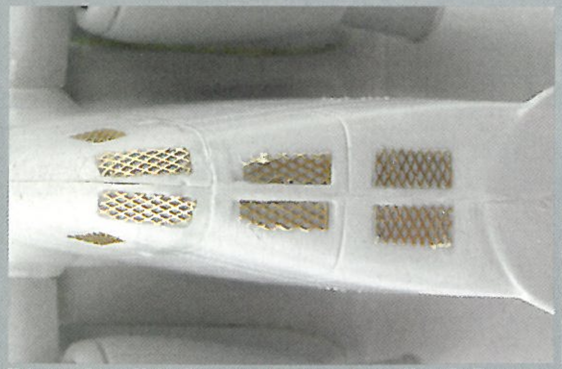
Aber etched brass mesh was used to replace the kit supplied nylon mesh. After using the templates supplied in the instructions, the mesh was formed with the aid of a Mission Models Micro Chisel.



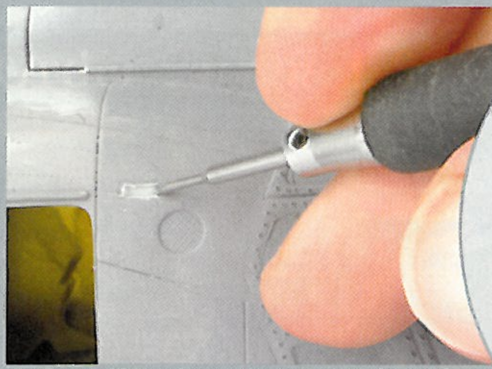
Around the rear ramp areas there are a few gaps which will need addressing.



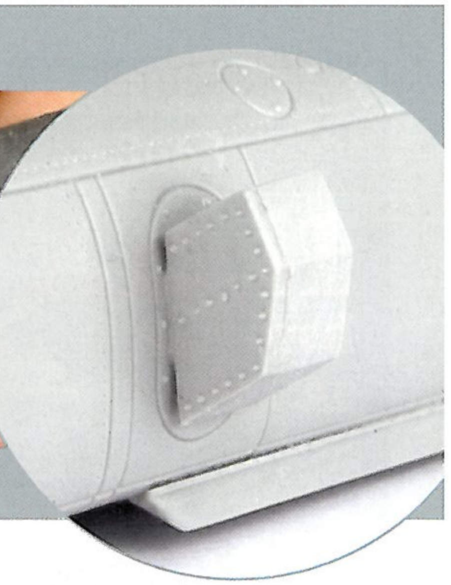
The two rectangular holes are designed to locate the ramp hinges. These are best covered over as these are still visible when the ramp in place.



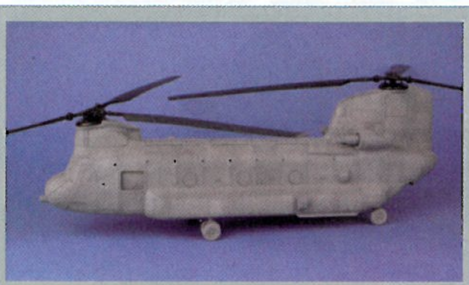
To improve the moulded grilles on the pylons and engine nacelles etched brass mesh was cut to shape and overlaid.



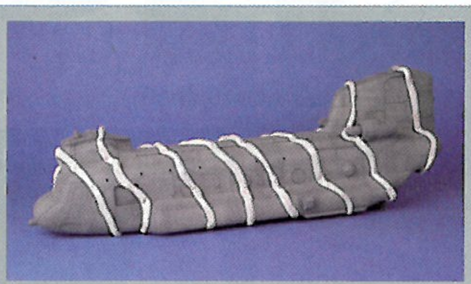
Just forward of the crew door should be a small recessed slot which houses the electrical connectors for the winch when fitted. This was chiselled out using Mission Models, Micro Chisel.



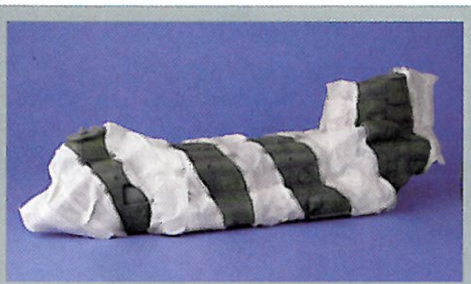
In the instructions it shows these flare dispenser mounts are shown fitted upside down! This is the correct orientation. Note some filling is required.



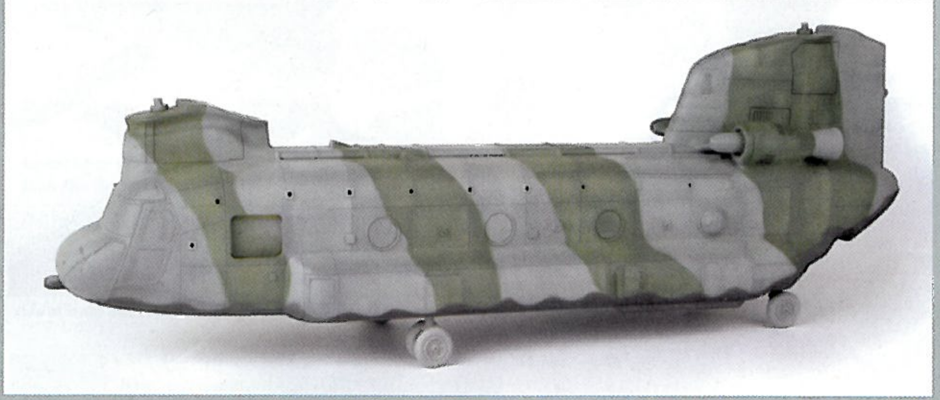
After a solid coat of Vallejo Dark Sea Grey certain panels and lines were picked out using Vallejo Medium Sea Grey and Light Grey.

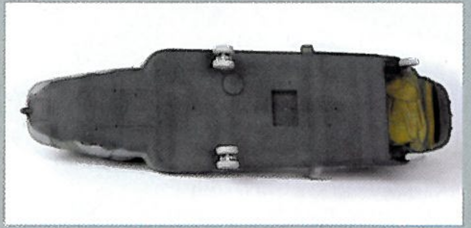


To get a tight demarcation between the camouflage colours, UHU White-Tack was rolled into thin sausages and wrapped around the fuselage.

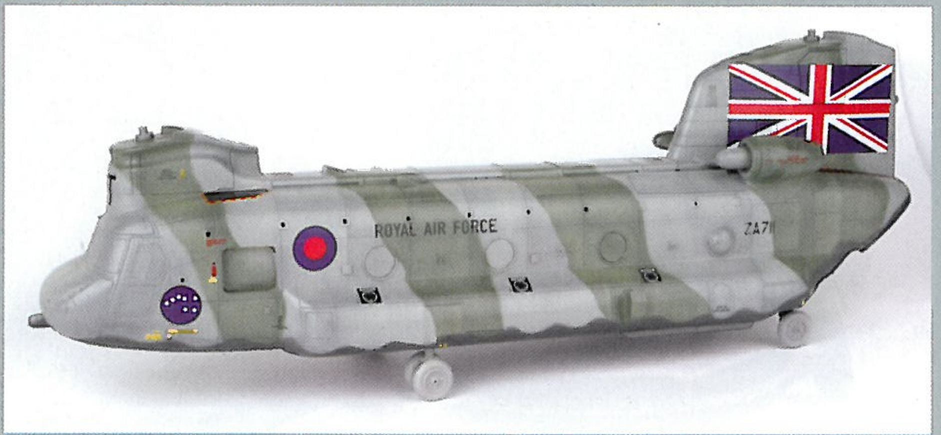


The Vallejo Dark Green has now been applied along with a heavy post shading. This will be toned down by misting over another more Dark Green lightened with some Interior Green.

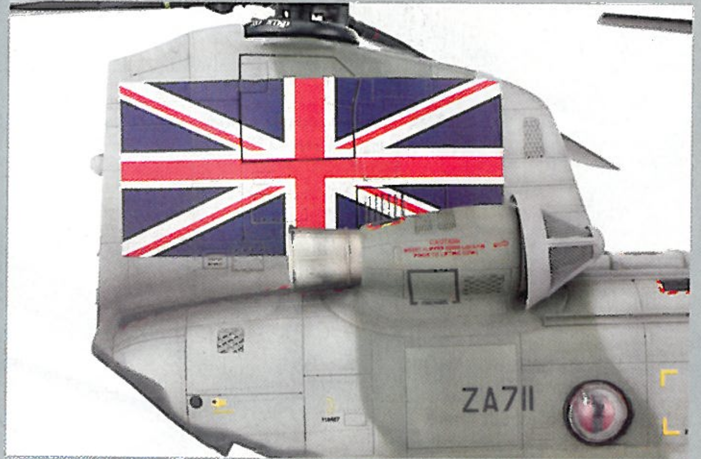




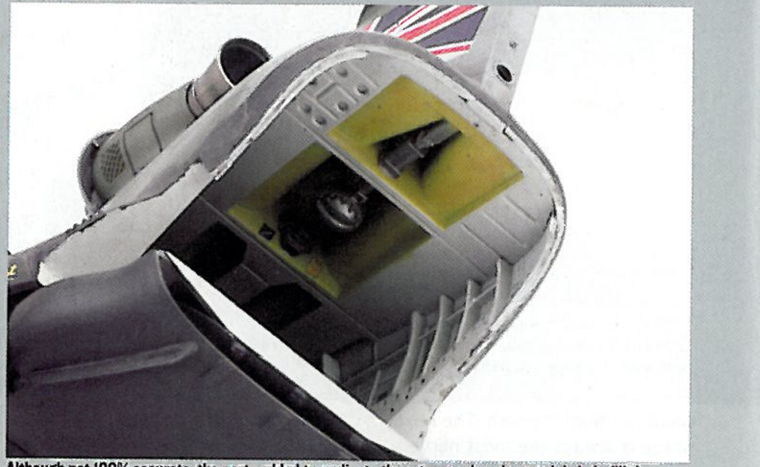
To apply the black to the underside a very long White-Tack sausage was rolled out and carefully shaped around the bottom of the fuselage to replicate the distinctive wavy line. A combination of Vallejo Black, Black/Grey and Panzer Aces Dark Rubber were used to achieve the shaded and faded look.



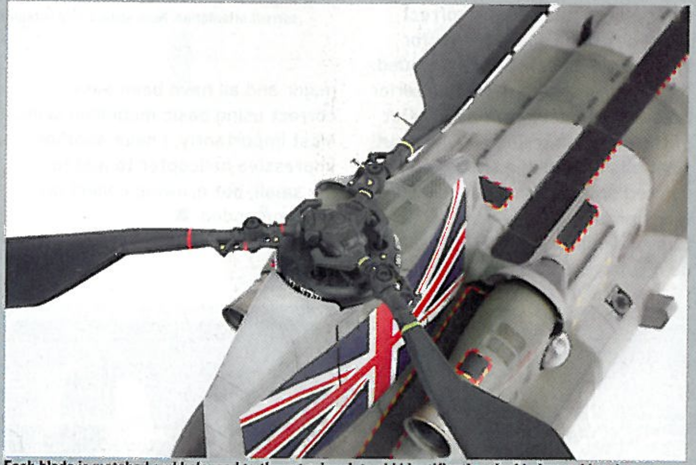
With the airbrushing complete, the next stage was to give the entire model a couple of light coats of Johnsons Klear in preparation for the decals.
Once the decals had been applied the final process involved a solid coat of Vallejo Matt varnish to restore the flat finish the real aircraft displayed.



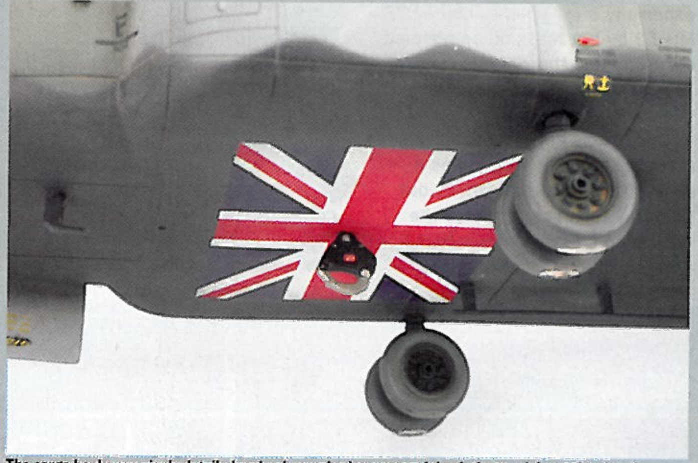
The very large Union Jacks went onto the aft pylon very well and snuggled down perfectly with the aid of Daco's strong decal setting solution.



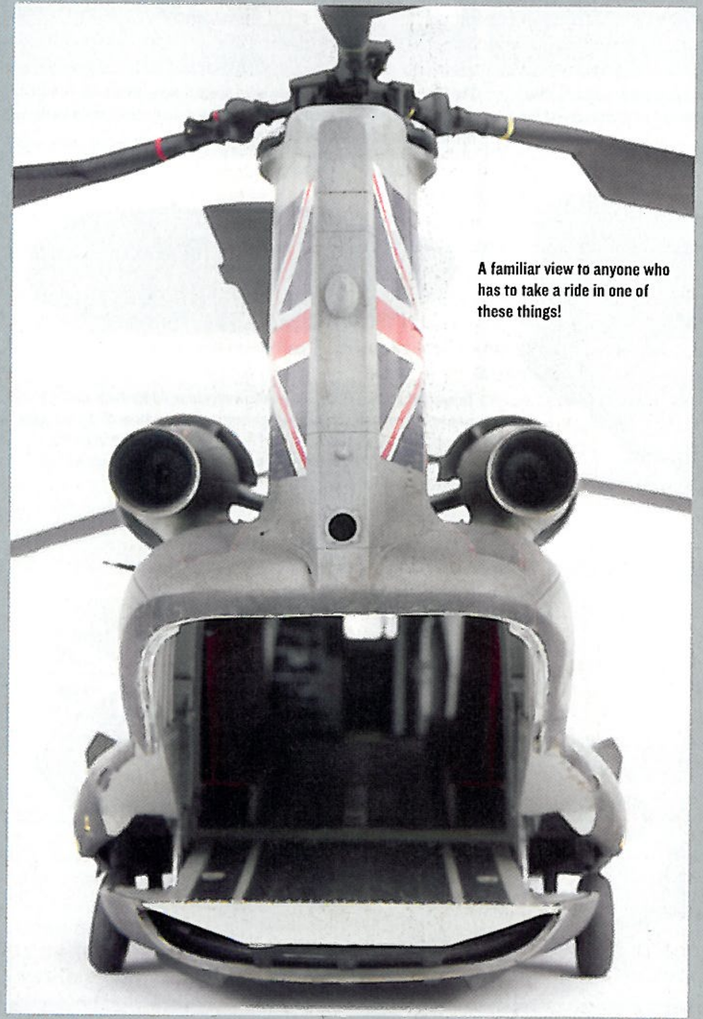
Although not 100% accurate, the parts added to replicate the rotor gearbox do certainly help fill the empty space. Note how the top half of the rear door retracts into the ramp.



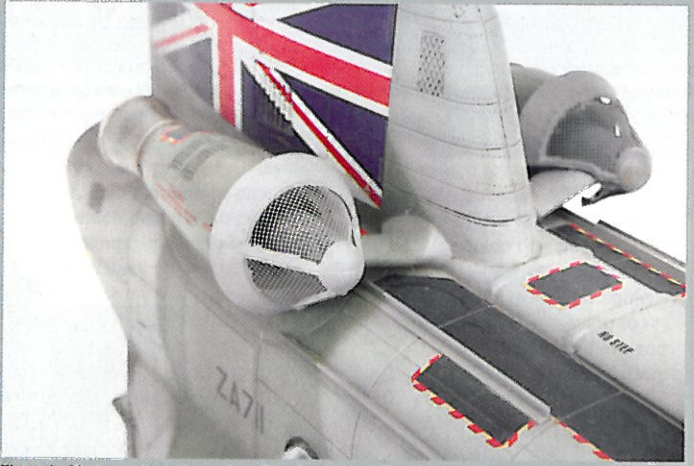
Each blade is matched and balanced to the rotor head, to aid identification the blades and head are colour coded, red, yellow and green.



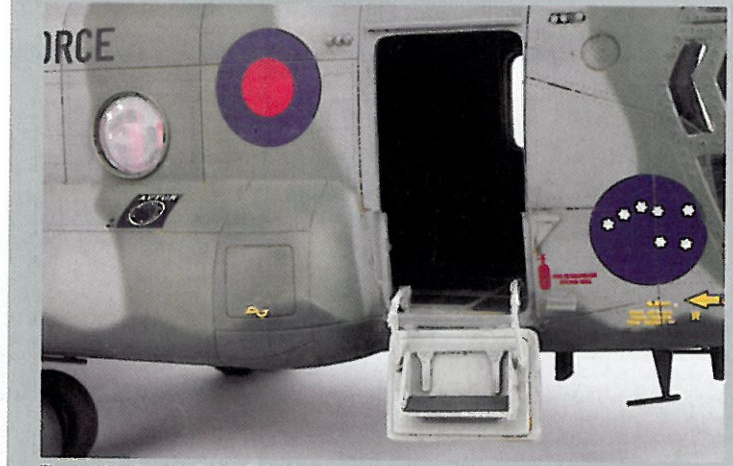
The cargo hooks are nicely detailed and only required some careful painting to pick out this detail. A small data placard from the Eduard set added the finishing touch.



A familiar view to anyone who has to take a ride in one of these things!



The etched brass mesh used to replace the nylon netting offers far more finesse. It is also easier to work with because it retains its shape.



The crew door is particularly well detailed. Note the prominent 7 Squadron Ursa Major 'Big Dipper' emblem.

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Modelspec

ITALERI 1:48 RAF CHINOOK HC.1 **KIT NO.2662**

Materials

Aber etched brass mesh
Accurate Armour etched brass mesh
Archer Panel Decals

Paints used

Vallejo:
Dark Green 012, Dark Sea Grey 048, Black 950, Black/Grey, Medium Sea Grey 049
Panzer Aces Dark Rubber 306
Light Grey 050
Games Workshops:
Mithril Silver, Chain Mail

References

WWP Chinook in detail
Squadron Signal CH-47 In Action
Airlife Special Operations Aviation

☑ Practical size great subject matter.
☒ Fit of the interior bulkhead, incorrect fixtures and fittings. Details not right for specific aircraft, not enough decals for the BRITFORLEB version.

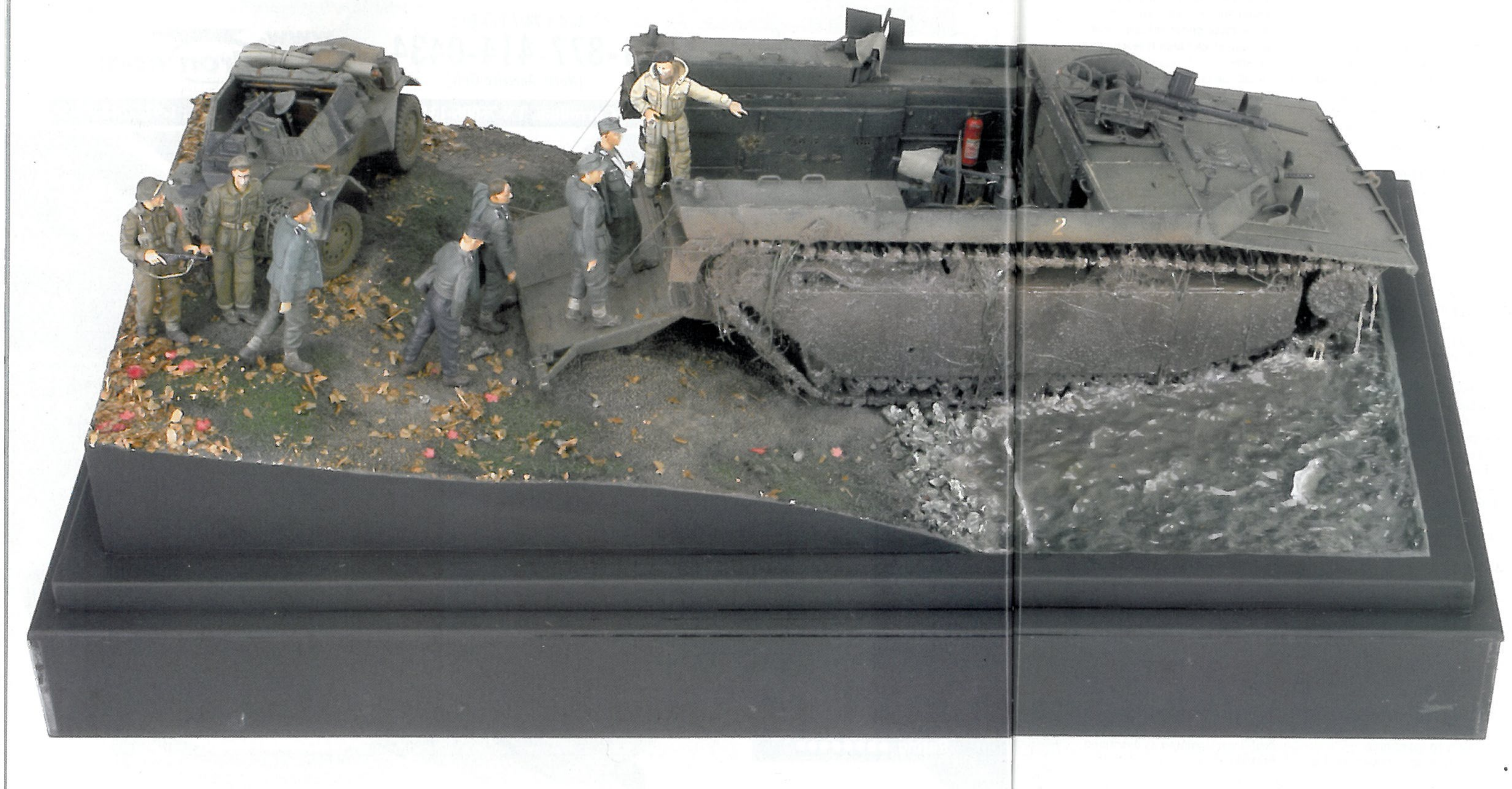
Available from

All good model shops

Rating ●●●●●●●●○○

BUFFALO SOLDIER

Matt Edwards builds a diorama around Italeri's LVT-4 whilst adding water to a scene for the first time...



I have wanted to build the Italeri LVT-4, Buffalo, in British service for some time, but could not decide how to portray it - ie; should it be in the water, loaded on a truck or have troops disembarking from it? I then saw a set of figures from Master Box entitled 'German Captives 1944' and decided I would have the Buffalo being loaded with POWs, as seen in footage from the period. Whilst planning the diorama, I decided to also incorporate Tamiya's Daimler MKII Dingo Scout Car. This, I hoped, would give the LVT-4 some sense of scale.

LOCKING HORNS WITH THE BUFFALO

A lot has been written about Italeri's kit of this vehicle and sure enough it does have its faults. But these can be rectified with a little patience. It is not beyond the realms of someone who has basic modelling skills to fix these faults as they are not major.

I had purchased a new set of tracks from Accurate Armour as those supplied are a little on the heavy side. I also had for the build, a Polsten cannon from Cromwell models and a detail set from Eduard which came in very handy when replacing some of the more heavily moulded details.

ASSEMBLY

I followed the instructions supplied with the model, referring also to the Eduard plans for the replacement parts. I also checked my references throughout the build which came in the form of articles in books and magazines and photos found on the internet.

It would appear that the Buffalo produced by Italeri is based on a late type from around the 1950's and as such, certain items need to be removed - the seats in the cargo bay and the detail engraved on the floor plate, as well as some inner side panelling that needs to be added not removed.

I was trying to replicate a late WWII LVT-4 as used by the British Army in Europe during late 1944/ early 1945 and was working from an excellent article by Bruce Crosby in April 2002 issue of Military Modelling. The Eduard parts, as I have said, came in very handy for this vehicle; the sponson armour securing brackets were used to replace those moulded on the kit. I also added bolts and weld seams where necessary. Inside the cargo bay itself I added armour plate and fuel tank covers fashioned from plastic card.

Extra securing bolts were added around the driving compartment doorways, these coming from my punch and die set. The ramp also received some attention by way of a weld seam down the centre and pulleys made from discs of plastic card. All the handles situated on or around the vehicle were remade using fuse wire. The rear wash vanes were replaced with etched items. Above these should be a recess into which was a lamp was fitted. I replicated the lamp by drilling a small hole, inserting a small disc of plastic and adding three securing bolts around it. The MG mounts could do with a little detailing and again the Eduard set came in handy here. Italeri have missed a few bolts and other details around the roof of the crew area, such as the aerial mount; this came from the spares box. These again were added, checking my references as I went.

Once happy with the basic construction of the Buffalo, I added any missing weld seams and re-scribed some of the panel lines which had been distorted with filler during construction.

POLSTEN

The Polsten cannon was added to many of the British Buffalos providing added fire power. The cannon from Cromwell Models is a wonderful, if delicate kit, and portrays the real thing very accurately indeed. Assembly of this was straightforward but do take care when handling as the resin on some parts is quite delicate.

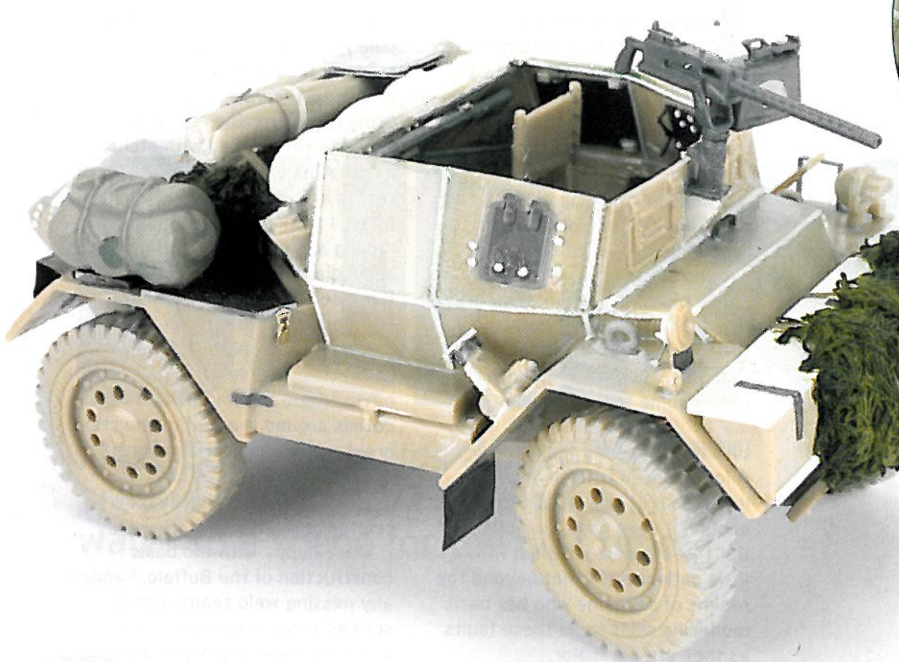
MUD BATH

The vehicle had now been built and in its diorama it would be at rest on the water's edge. Wanting to show how dirty it would be, I then set about simulating mud and reeds on the tracks and sides of the vehicle. I did this with mixtures of sand, household filler, static grass and rough gardening string. It was built up in layers and when I was happy with the look, left to dry.

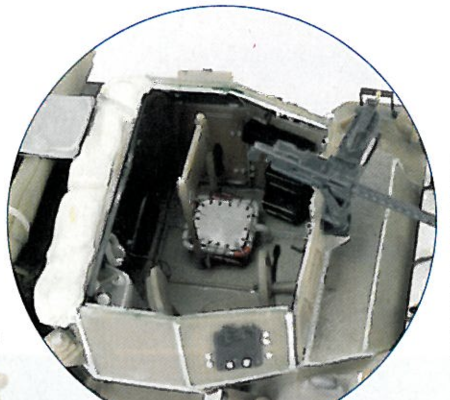
WAR PAINT

The model was given a base coat of matt black over which was misted Tamiya XF-62 Olive Drab. Lighter shades of this colour, mixed with different amounts of sand and white, were then sprayed onto the various upper panels to give the appearance of faded paintwork.

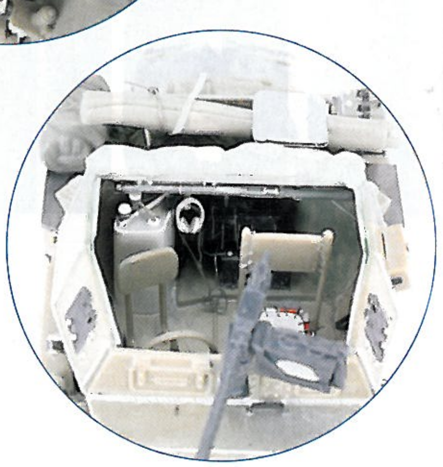
Once dry, I added the 79th Armoured Division insignia before giving the panel lines and raised detail a wash in various dark and light colours, using a mixture of enamel and oil paints thinned with white spirit for this purpose. I used this mixture to achieve varying colours in the panel lines to show that some of the dirt and grime had dried and some remained wet. ▶



Tamiya's ancient Daimler MkII 'Dingo' scout car has been given a new lease of life with some serious detailing from the author.



Many of the original kit interior parts were destined for the scrap bin. The interior was re-worked using a combination of scratchbuilt parts from plastic card and rod and Eduard's etched detail set (ED35143) available from LSA Models.



Barely visible in this shot is the replacement radio included in the Eduard set, and along with this the author added scratchbuilt headphones and wiring.

◀ WEAPON COLOURS

The machine guns and cannon were painted with a mixture of blue and black enamel and highlights picked out in dull silver, all mixed from enamel paint.

The wooden handle on the Polsten cannon was first painted white before a wash of Burnt Sienna oil paint was applied. Scratches and scuffs were painted on with a finely pointed brush using several colours from the Vallejo range, which were diluted to varying degrees, giving the appearance of heavy or light use, depending on the amount the paint was thinned.

DETAIL PAINTING

The episcopes were painted gloss black and given a coat of varnish. The tracks were then picked out in several earth colours before given a light dry-brushing in metal colours. The mud, dirt and reeds were also painted at this time using oils, enamels and acrylics to achieve a realistic look. When this area was dry, I then gave it several coats of acrylic satin varnish, applied with a brush, dragging the varnish downwards. I hoped this would give the look of excess water cascading down the sponsons.

The final additions were a few items of stowage, such as jerry cans, oil containers, a fire extinguisher and a rope, all of which came from the spares box.

A little gloss varnish and some pastel chalk was then dabbed around the floor area to give that part of the vehicle a used look and hopefully the varnish would replicate a little water which had made its way on-board.

DINGO GETS A MAKE-OVER.

The Daimler MKII Scout Car (Dingo) produced by Tamiya is a very old kit and is not up to today's standard; it took a lot of time and patience to bring it up to scratch. I started by purchasing another detail set from Eduard and although this goes some way in updating the kit, a lot of extra work is still needed.

First I rebuilt all the suspension, as that supplied is over simplified and toy like. The internal details are lacking and those supplied were pretty much redundant. Checking my references constantly and adding parts from the detail set, I went about rebuilding the interior, including the radio, seats and all the missing bolt and rivet detail. Hopefully, you will be able to identify all the extra work from the accompanying photos.

EXTERIOR

The outside of the vehicle was also enhanced with the help of the etched set as well as other details added using brass rod and strip and plastic card. The stowage came from the spares box along with some items I scratchbuilt from epoxy putty. The securing straps were made from a combination of lead foil and masking tape and secured with super glue.

If you attempt this vehicle and plan on detailing the interior, I recommend that you leave the front armour plates off until after painting, which I didn't! More of this later!

A .30 cal machine gun was added to the front. The brackets being made from scrap items. Also fixed was a camouflage net, held in place with thread which was stiffened with PVA glue.

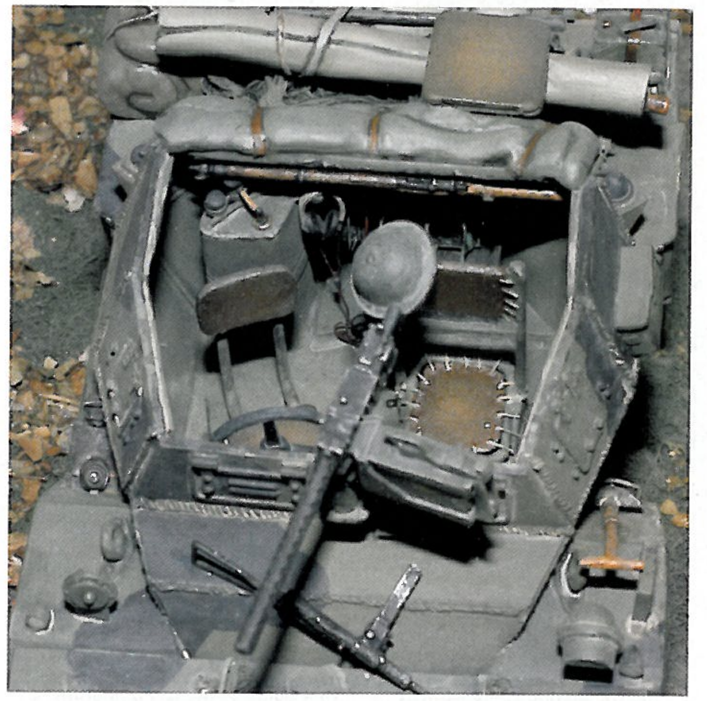
DECORATING THE DINGO

The Dingo was then washed in detergent and when dry was given a coat of matt black paint as per the Buffalo. It then received several coats of Tamiya XF-51 Khaki Drab, lightened in some areas. Over this was painted a Mickey-Mouse ear camouflage pattern in very dark grey. In reality this pattern is painted using black, but I do not use pure black for camouflage on models as I do not think it looks right in this scale.

The exhaust was coated in a layer of Liquid Poly and stippled with an old stiff brush before several shades of orange and brown were added to give the appearance of rust.

The scout car was then given a wash in light coloured oil paints after which the crew compartment was painted, checking references as I did so. This was a long and laborious task as it was hard to get into certain areas, due to the fact that I had already secured the front plate!

The paints used on the internal area were a mixture of acrylic and enamels, varying the shades and adding shadows using heavy washes of oil paint. Scratches and scuffs were painted as described for the LVT-4.



By far the trickiest part for the author was trying to paint all of the interior after assembly was almost complete. This is due to the way the Dingo has to be built following the instructions. A job for a steady hand.

THE POWS

The set "German Captives 1944" by Master Box are new to the market and the company must be commended for their originality and style. The details on the uniforms are quite sharp, but can be enhanced more with the aid of a scalpel. I also added some insignia from an etched brass set and gave all of them new heads from the spares box.

I used Vallejo paints for the uniforms, mixing different colours for each figure to get some variation in tone. Painting the figures' clothing did take some time, especially adding all the shadows and highlights, but does look authentic when finished. To achieve this, the uniform is given a base coat of its original colour, for example, field grey. The shadows are then painted from a mixture of the base coat plus black. Highlights are then picked out using more of the base coat lightened with varying amounts of sunny skin tone, to which a small amount of water is added. The mixture needs to be more of a milky consistency for this layering process. After this, the final detail painting could be added to finish off.

BRITISH FIGURES

The Buffalo crewman came from Dragon's Firefly kit and was given a new head and left arm. I then scraped around the detail with a new scalpel blade to define the soft detail of the kit parts. The two British rifle brigade figures came from the spares box but were mainly put together from Tamiya parts. All their uniforms were painted as per the Germans but obviously in different colours.

All of the flesh areas were painted in oils. Some of the figures received more of a weather beaten and tired appearance than others to add a little character.

TROUBLED WATERS

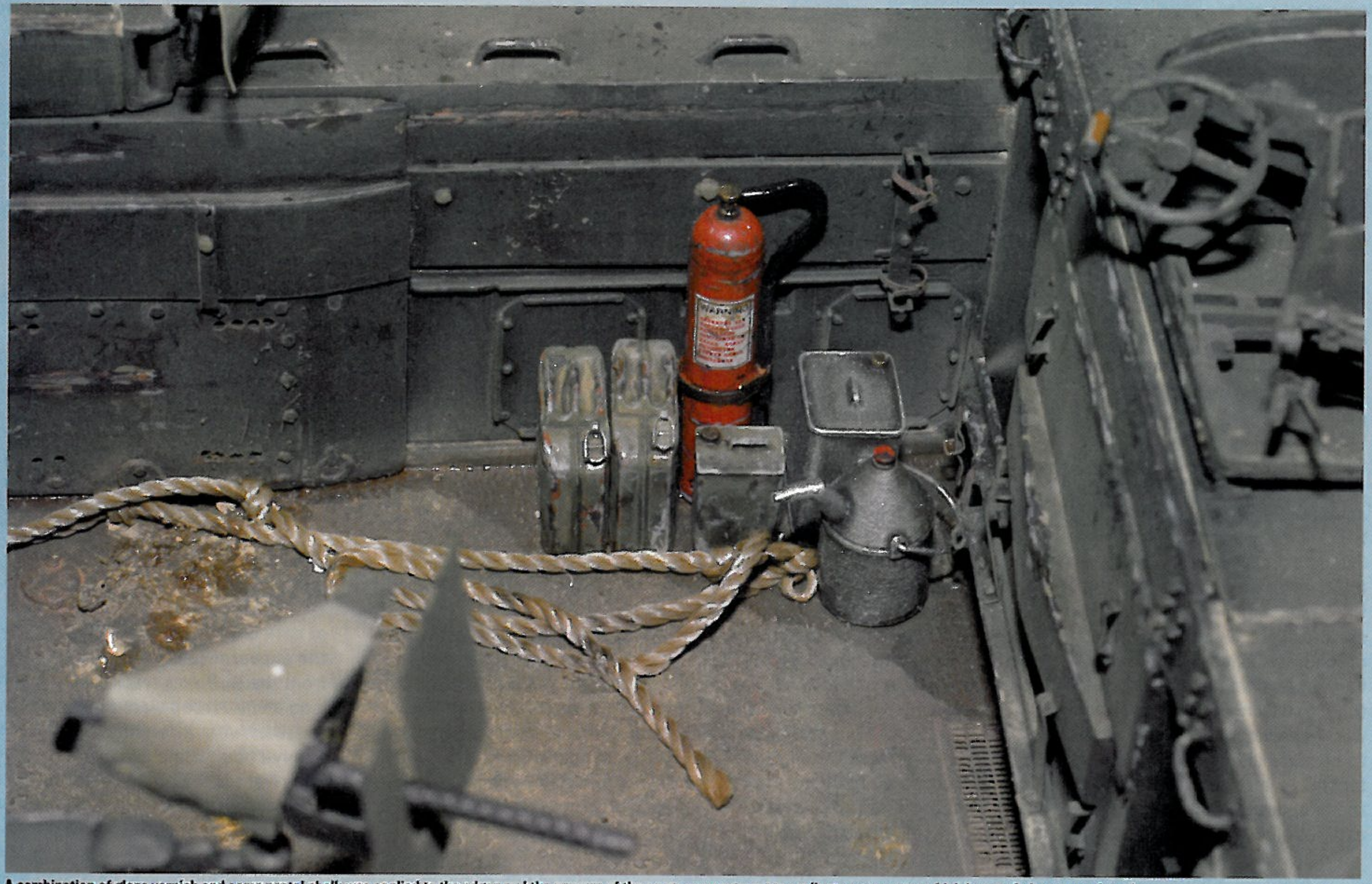
To start with, I built a frame from sections of plastic which were fixed onto the lid of an acrylic box purchased from a local stationer.

The groundwork was mixed from household filler, fine sand and PVA glue. This was then built up over pieces of polystyrene, which had already been glued onto the lid with PVA.

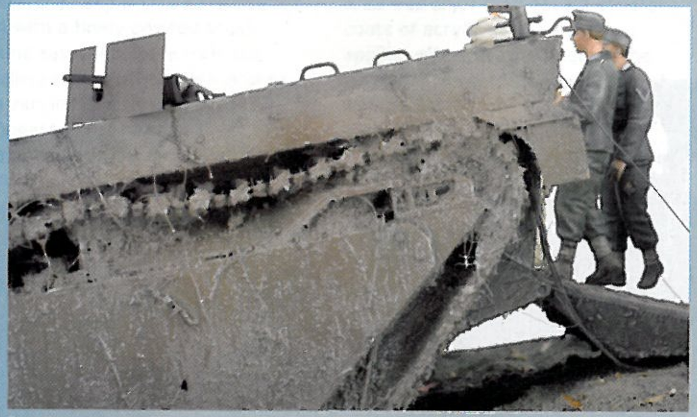
When nearly dry, the Buffalo and Dingo were placed onto the diorama and test fitted, as were the figures, before more of the groundwork was built-up around them. Once I was happy with the appearance, static grass was fixed to the riverbank area and a small amount of cat litter put along the water's edge.

The vehicles were then removed and the groundwork painted. The riverbed received several coats of dark green and brown to give the appearance of disturbance from the Buffalo's track. The land and riverbed were blended together with different shades of Tamiya paint using an airbrush. The riverbed was then sealed with several coats of PVA glue. Some of the bank area received a light ▶

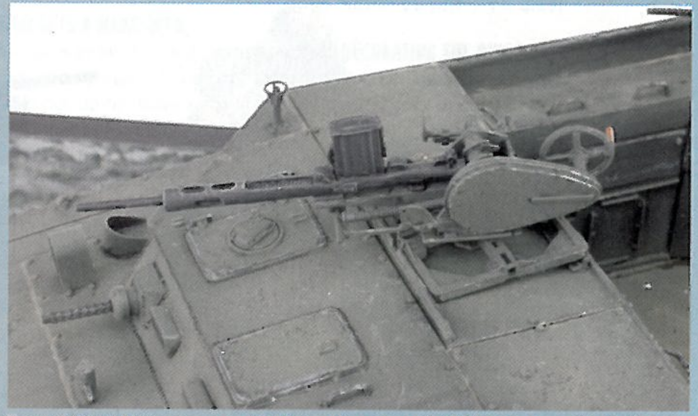
The two British figures came from the author's spares box. Both received replacement heads from Hornet Models, available from Historex Agents.



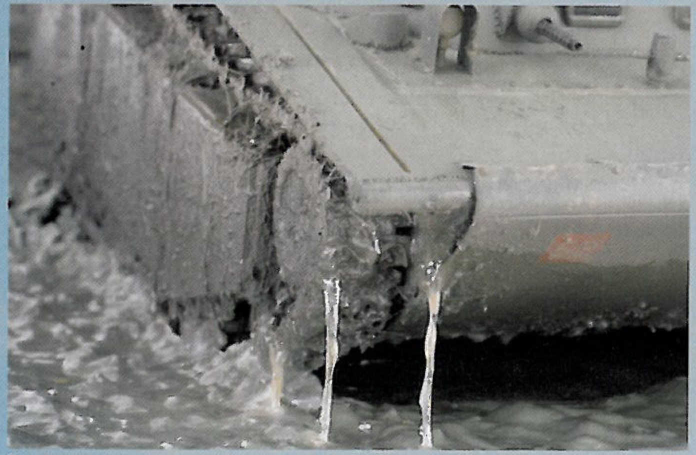
A combination of gloss varnish and some pastel chalk was applied to the edges and the corners of the cargo compartment to replicate some water which has made its way on-board.



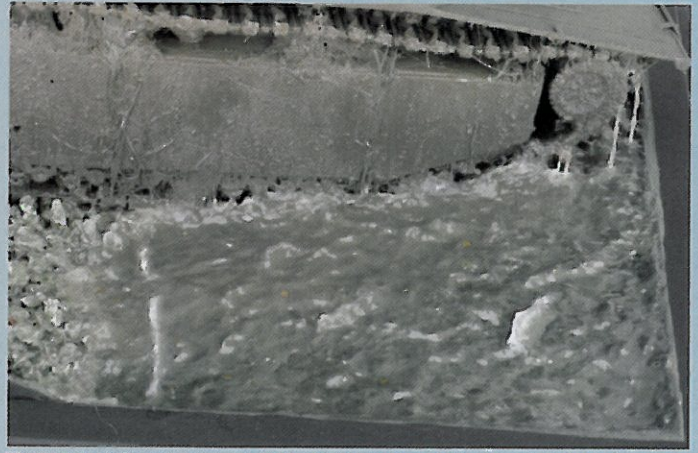
The effect of the water cascading down the sponson sides was replicated by brush painting on several coats of satin varnish in a vertical motion. The wet mud and tangled reeds really give the impression that the LVT has had to claw its way up the river bank.



Cromwell Models Polsten cannon really adds some firepower to the LVT. The gun was painted using a mixture of blue and black enamel to represent the 'bluing' which is an electrochemical coating to prevent corrosion on the weapon's surface.



To achieve the running water effect the author attached clear plastic sprue before painting on a mix of gloss varnish and light brown to give the water a slightly muddy look.



The water was built-up by applying several layers of clear silicone bathroom sealant. The ripples were created using the handle of an old paintbrush before finally some 10-15 layers of gloss varnish.

◀ dry-brushing to accentuate detail. The static grass was picked out in different greens, which were highlighted here and there using yellow. The cat litter, light grey and then washed in dark grey and lime green, before a light dry-bushing in white.

RUNNING WATER

The Buffalo was then placed in situ and the water was built up around it. I had not attempted to replicate water before and looked at several possibilities, settling on my own, which I think worked quite well. I did this by using several layers of translucent bathroom sealant. Each layer of sealant had to be left to dry before adding ripples fashioned with the handle of a paint brush. When the correct appearance formed around the Buffalo, I then brushed on 10-15 layers of gloss varnish. This was allowed to flow around the wheels and tracks of the vehicle. To give the look of running water from the front of the vehicle, clear sprue was attached and then painted with a mix of gloss varnish, tinted with light brown.

I then turned my attention back to the groundwork. The Dingo was put in place and pastels used to blend the tyres and earth together. All of the figures were now secured to the base using super glue.

The fallen leaves came from several sources, some being manufactured and others collected from the garden and crushed to the correct scale, all secured with thinned PVA glue. I also added a few onto the water and then coated them in varnish.

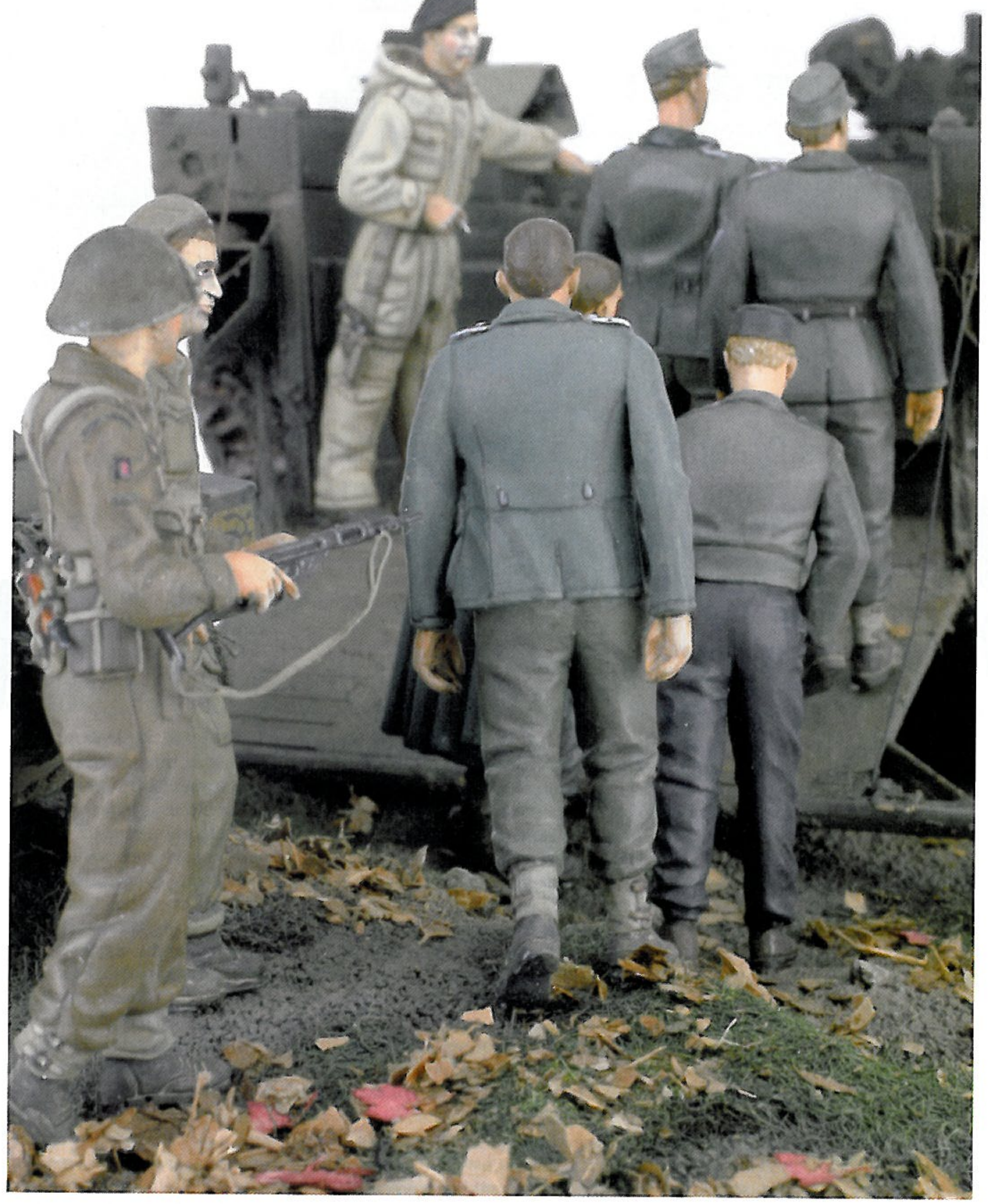
CONCLUSION

The whole diorama took about two months to build but the results, to me at least, are quite pleasing. I may now put more water in my scenes as the fear of ruining the look has gone.

As stated earlier, the LVT-4 by Italeri has a few faults but that does not detract from its appeal and I enjoyed the building of it immensely. The Dingo on the other hand was a different matter and we could do with a new one. But then again this is what modelling is all about and it certainly tested my skill and patience.

Master Box has a winner on their hands with these figures and I will be buying more from them in the future. I have looked at some of the new figures posted on the web which have yet to come out and am looking forward to more British figures from this very good, up and coming manufacturer. A big thank you goes to my partner Tracy for letting me know in her un-diplomatic way that the water was not quite right at certain stages during construction! ■

"Make your self comfortable lads, for you the war is over".



Modelspec

ITALERI 1:35 LVT-4 AND
TAMIYA DAIMLER DINGO ARMOURED CAR

Materials

Italeri LVT-4 Water Buffalo (IT0379)
Tamiya Daimler MKII Dingo Scout Car (TA35018)
Master Box German Captives 1944 (MB3517)

Accessories

Dragon Firefly VC (6182)
Eduard LVT-4 (ED35358)
Eduard Dingo (ED35143)
Accurate Armour LVT/Alligator track (T23)
Cromwell Models Polsten cannon (CA128)
Hornet (various heads)

Paints

Tamiya
XF-51 Khaki Drab, XF-62 Olive Drab, XF-2 Flat White, XF-57 Buff, XF-72 JGDF Brown
Winsor and Newton oils
Titanium white, Burnt Sienna, Raw Umber, Ochre

References

Model Military International Magazine - issue 5
Concord Publications 'British Tanks of WWII (2) Holland & Germany 1944-5
Squadron/signal publications 'Amtracs in Action'
Concord Publications US Amtracs and Amphibians at War 1941-1945
Allied-Axis issue 8 'LVTs at the Front'
New Vanguard - Amtracs US Amphibious Assault Vehicles
Military Modelling April 2002 AFV Special
Various books and websites

☑ Italeri LVT-4 - good subject matter and good value for money
Tamiya Daimler Dingo - only one available
German captives - good poses, very original

☒ Italeri LVT-4 - some over simplified parts with soft detail
Tamiya Daimler Dingo - toy like, needs a lot of work
German captives - heads need replacing

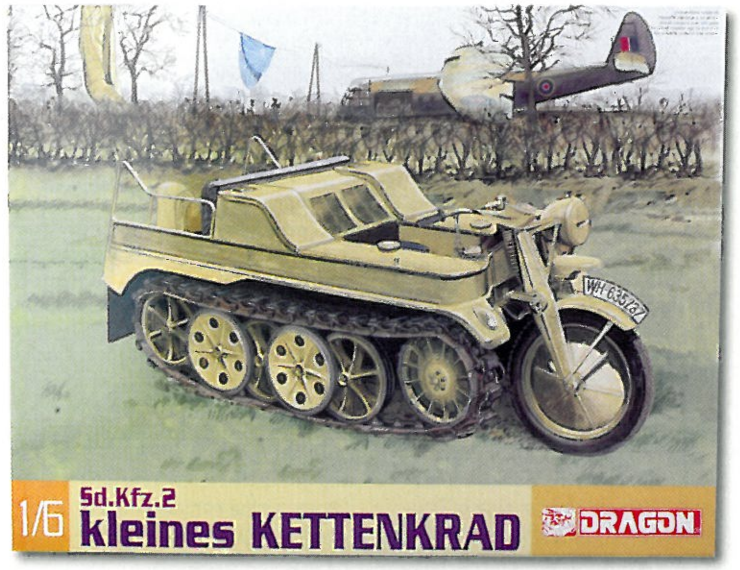
Rating

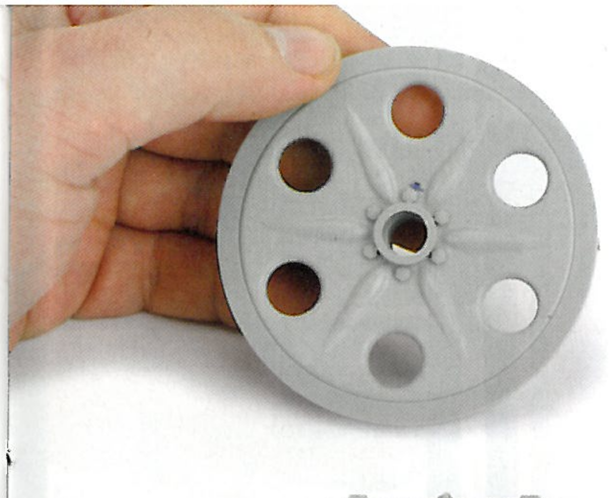
Italeri LVT-4 - 8/10
Tamiya Daimler Dingo - 5/10
German captives - 8/10

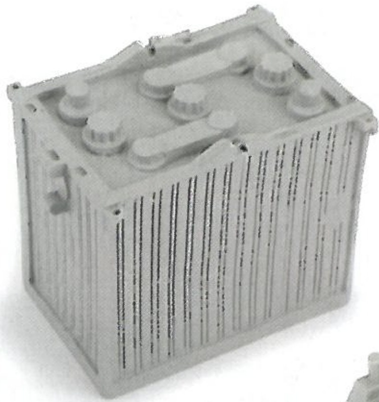
Available from

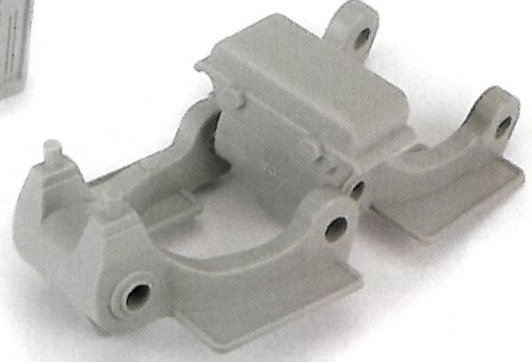
All good model shops worldwide

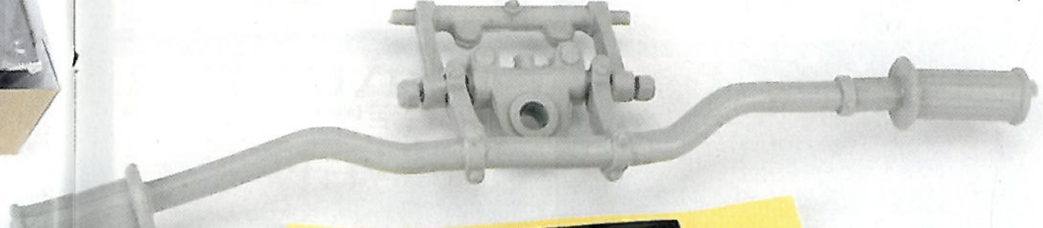
Rating - *see above*

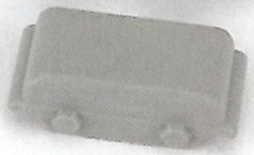












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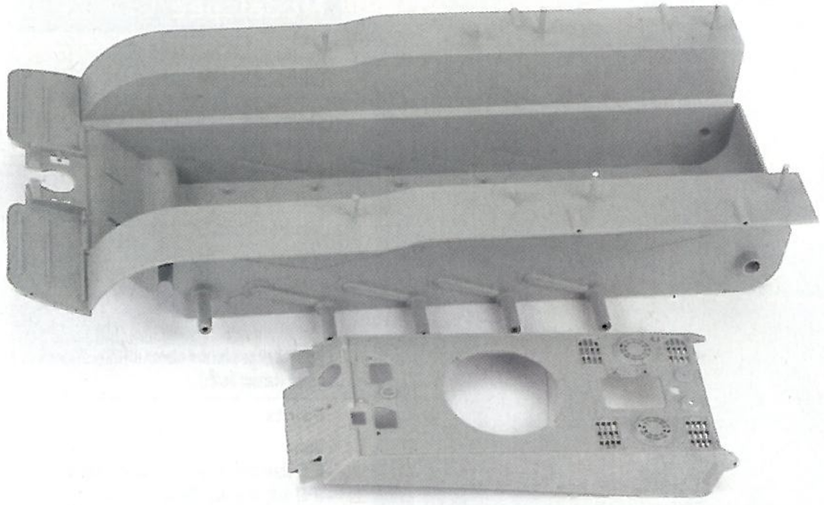
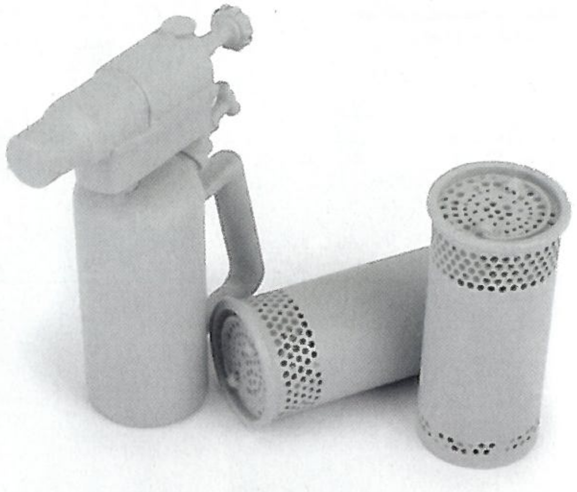
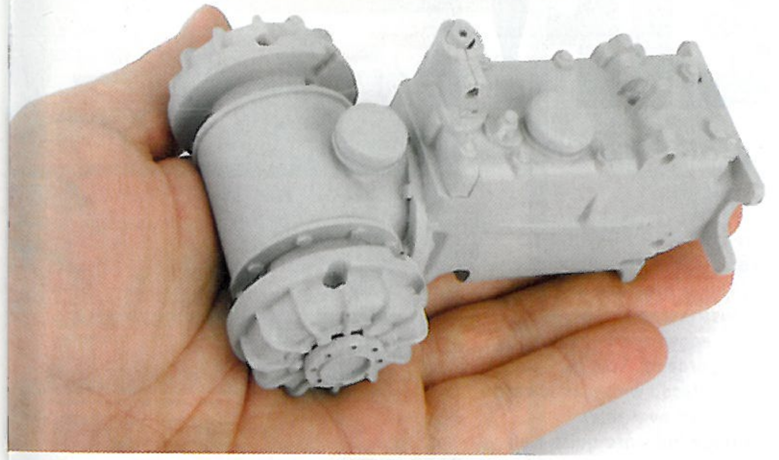
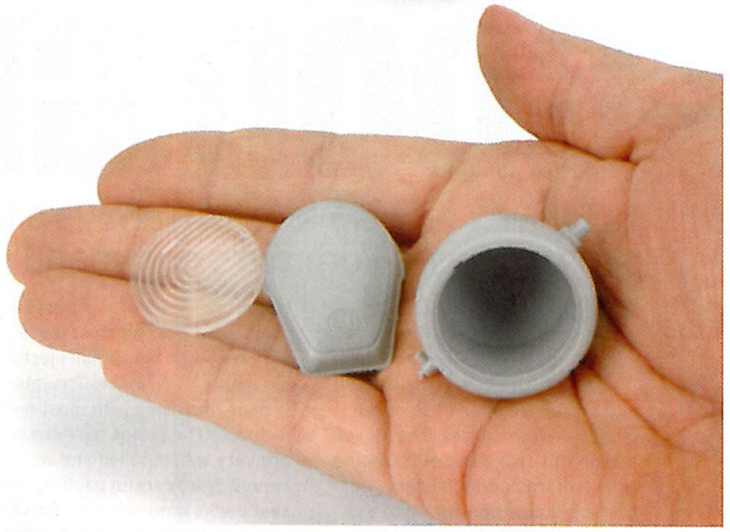








Graeme Carruthers test drives Dragon's huge 1:6 Kettenkrad.

IS BIGGER ALWAYS BETTER?

When Spud asked at me at Euro Militaire if I would like to review this latest offering from Dragon it certainly sparked my interest, not just because of the cool subject matter but because of the size; it is not often that a new kit in 1:6 presents itself.

The Kettenkraftrad is a weird looking hybrid between a motor cycle and a small tank. It entered service in mid 1941 and went to serve on all fronts during the war. Its good off-road capabilities and its ability to haul a small trailer meant that it continued in production for a few years after the war and was widely exported.

Upon opening the box and getting over the initial surprise of how large the pieces are, (the front tyre is almost 11cm in diameter) my next reaction was that I thought there would be more pieces. Now don't get me wrong, this big box is crammed full of plastic and resin but a third of the space is taken up by a single piece tub for the hull and there are a couple of bags full of bits to make up the track links with four pieces per link. Taking these into account there aren't that many other bits left.

Having a look at what there is in the box, apart from the pieces already mentioned, you will find a big single resin block for the transmission, other resin extras, some nicely shaped springs for the front forks, metal struts, wire mesh and peel off decals for the instruments. The parts are for the most part cleanly moulded and are all individual pieces. None of the plastic bits are found on sprues, they are all in bags. There are however quite a few knock-out marks on the various pieces but none appear, at first glance, to be anywhere that will be visible. The plastic parts of the kit are all cleanly moulded as is the Dragon way but the resin pieces leave a lot to be desired. The single, one piece transmission block is not only very heavy, (not good for cheap mail ordering of this kit) it is also a bit soft at the edges. I can see no reason why this shouldn't have been made out of plastic. The one piece handlebar unit is the weakest part of the entire kit, not only was the detail soft and mushy but it was bent out of shape with each handlebar pointing in different directions, neither of which was the correct direction!

The wire mesh which covers the engine compartment is nicely represented by a section of in scale looking actual wire mesh and it should look good when in place. However, and this is a big however, the lovely mesh screen will let you look down into a big empty hole! There is no engine provided, not even a shape to represent the engine, nothing! This is a big disappointment especially in a kit of this size where the empty space is much more obvious.

The driver's area is in reality a busy area full of wire, cables and connectors with little space for the driver's legs but a lot of this detail in the kit is missing and you will need to check your references in order to busy it up. There is no mention in the instructions of all the brake cables on the handle bars so again, you will need to source photos of the real vehicle to wire up your kit properly. Also missing from the front area is the sheet metal covering which sits on top of the forks and behind the main light, which is strange as it is depicted in the artwork on the box top. The driver's seat is missing the set of prominent metal studs that surround its edge, again a simple mistake from Dragon.

The rear of the kit has some nice innovations with the blackout light being able to be positioned in three different ways, a nice touch. However, on either side of it are a set of louvres that are moulded as solid shapes without the cut-outs at the bottom; in this scale it's a very obvious omission and the modeller will need to cut them out.

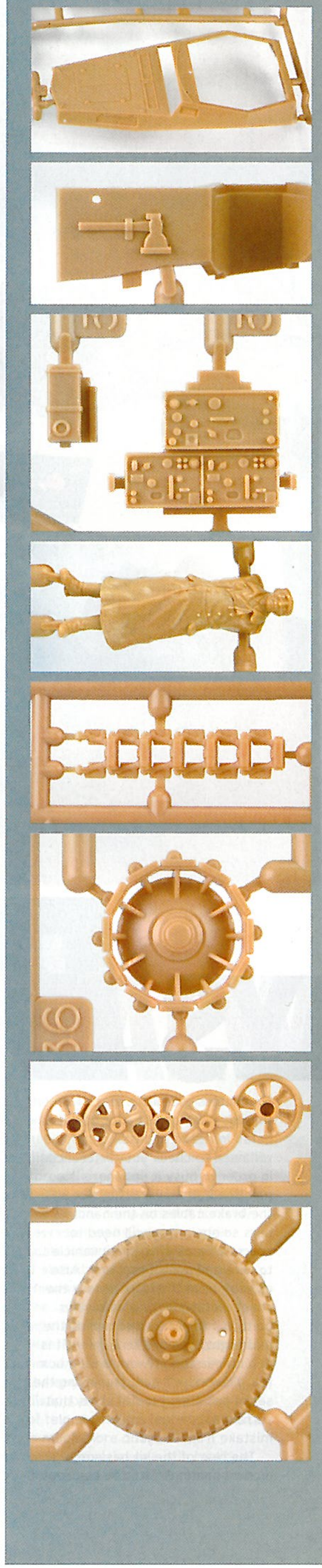
The suspension arms are moulded onto the main body tub such that you can't position them as you wish. The tracks look nicely detailed although they will take a while to put together but the effort should be rewarded as they will sag nicely onto the top of the road wheels. The road wheels are well shaped and come in two parts but they are missing the weld seam that runs along the centre of each of the spokes. The drive sprockets are nicely moulded in two parts with clean, crisp strengthening ribs. However, in between the ribs there should be two large nuts and bolts that hold on the individual rubber pads but Dragon have missed these out even though again they are illustrated on the box lid.

Now does this kit shine like a Vegas Starfish or is it a dud? Well it is a bit of both really, there are some great parts and some terrible parts and then there are all the missing parts to consider. Having seen the latest superb offerings in 1:35 from Dragon I was surprised by the more miss-than-hit quality of this kit. The only reason I can think of for the shortcomings found here is that this kit isn't really designed with the modeller in mind but more for the collectors of Dragon's range of 'Battle Barbie' action figures! Still, with a bit of work and scratchbuilding, the kit could be made into something spectacular although possibly only for the modeller with a lot of spare room to display the monster.

Many thanks go to Bob Grimster for sending me a whole heap of photos of Kettenkraftrads with which to compare the kit. Another useful reference was Volume 2 in the Allied and Axis series by Ampersand Publishing. ■

Available from all good model shops worldwide

1/48 MILITARY MINIATURE SERIES NO.50
1/48 ミリタリーミニチュアシリーズ ドイツ無線指揮車 Sd.Kfz.250/3 グライフ
TAMIYA
1/48
GERMAN Sd.Kfz.250/3 GREIF



GOOD GREIF!

Luke Pitt takes a look at Tamiya's latest quarter-inch scale release, Rommel's command half-track.

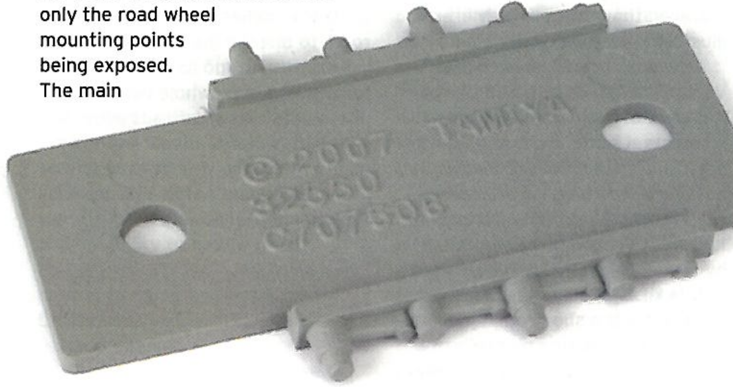
This new 1:48 scale Tamiya kit of the perennial German Sd.Kfz 250/3 has some 100 parts moulded in sand coloured plastic on four sprues. The 'cover art' on this release is outstanding with a sharp and technically correct illustration adorning the now familiar black boarded box. I would have liked Tamiya to allow the artist involved to sign his work, as he is one of the best military illustrators currently working today. The instructions provided are both easy to read and well laid out. Other kit manufacturers would benefit from looking at these.

Tamiya has seen fit to limit the use of a die-cast chassis on this release and as a result, more useful detail has been incorporated. This release has the chassis sandwiched between the lower body and interior, with only the road wheel mounting points being exposed. The main body is made up of four parts and is moulded (for the most part) very well with only small ejector pin marks in evidence. The interior is done fairly well with most parts included. The radios for example, are very well detailed and will benefit from careful painting. The seat backs however have no seat spring detail on the rear but this addition would have hardly been noticeable in 1:48 scale at any rate.

Tamiya have moulded all the inside road-wheels as one piece. This approach would usually mean a compromise in regard to the detail but Tamiya have pulled off something of a coup as no detail is lost and indeed, it is one of the best complex mouldings I have seen. The obvious bonus in this approach is that road-wheel alignment is almost fool-proof and indeed build-time is reduced. Some other parts however, have not been done very well; take for example, the machine gun shield. This is provided in the now industry standard of 'let us bevel the edges and hope nobody notices approach'. This part would best be replaced with plastic card or etch (when available).

The track links are quite well done, with only very fine knock out marks on the inside surfaces in evidence. All of the vision ports are intended to be glued shut but with a little effort these could be fixed in the open position. Most of the tools are moulded on and, to be perfectly honest, are quite acceptable. The three figures provided are best forgotten as they are pantographed versions of quite ancient seventies Tamiya figures. They lack both height and bulk.

The only markings choice provided is for Rommel's personal transport, aptly named 'Greif'. The markings correctly identify the word Greif in red and white on one side and only a white outline on the other. My only criticism here is the decals provided may be too neat in both style and form. The kit scales out very well to the 'Ryton' publication drawings of the SCHEUTZENPANZER and is a wonderful addition to the ever expanding range of Tamiya 1:48 armour. ■



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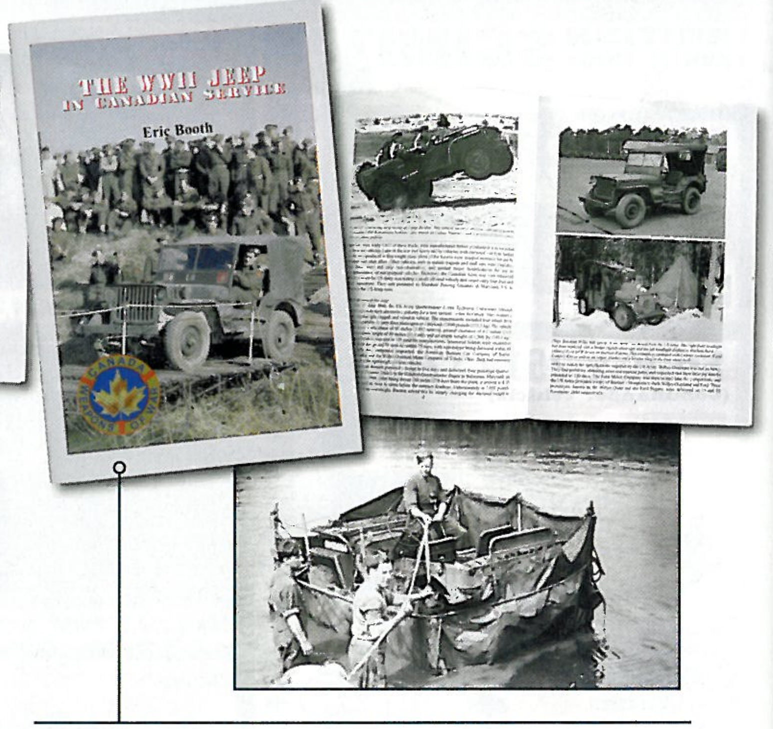
Book Reviews



THE ARMOURED AUTOCAR IN CANADIAN SERVICE

CAMERON PULSIFER • SERVICE PUBLICATIONS • ISBN 1-894581-38-7

This familiar format publication is the latest from Service Publications dealing with the WW1 Autocar, a two ton truck armed with colt machine guns (later replaced by the more common Vickers). Twenty four pages contain the text that describes the armoured version of the Autocar with plenty of black and white photos showing the vehicle in service as well as several other versions. Eight scale drawings depict two different vehicles.

Of particular interest is a description of the Automobile Machine Gun Brigade, the unit that was equipped with the armoured Autocar and saw service throughout the First World War.

All in all the book is an interesting read and is a necessary title in a series of books detailing Canadian weaponry.

Available from www.servicepub.com

Keith Goldsworthy

THE WWII JEEP IN CANADIAN SERVICE

ERIC BOOTH • SERVICE PUBLICATIONS • ISBN 1-894581-34-9

Firstly, this is not a title dedicated to a full overview of the Willys Jeep, there are plenty of other titles on the market that do that - this is a description of the ubiquitous Willys Jeep in Canadian service. Thousands of Willys Jeeps saw service with the Canadians, some supplied directly, most via Britain and some by 'unofficial' means. All this despite the original preference being for the Bantam and Ford GP vehicles. The twenty four page book deals with the history of the vehicle and goes on to describe modifications made to make the versatile vehicle even more versatile. Plenty of period photos complement the text and will provide the modeller plenty of reference.

A couple of paragraphs and photographs also deal with the amphibious Jeep. There are no scale drawings in this title (unlike many of the other titles in the series) but this is more than made up for by the photographs.

Anyone interested in the Canadian Army of WWII will find this extremely useful given the proliferation of Jeeps in all types of units.

Available from www.servicepub.com

Keith Goldsworthy

STRYKER IN DETAIL
US STRYKER INTERIM ARMOURED VEHICLE FAMILY PT 1

PRESENT VEHICLE LINE NO 17

RALPH ZWILLING • WINGS AND WHEELS PUBLICATIONS • ISBN 978-80-96416-61-5

WWP go from strength to strength with their ever-increasing range of both AFV and aircraft subjects and the latest addition to the green line, the Stryker can only enhance that. Within the soft back is a multitude of high quality colour photographs, covering all the angles required to model this popular vehicle and with concise text to support the pictures. The M1126 ICV, M1127 RV, M1130 CV and M1132 ESV are covered in the 132 pages, giving you so much scope to replicate the subject using the Trumpeter or AFV Club kit (Dragon's is yet to be released at this time). You can expect that all the variants depicted will be future subjects for the aftermarket manufacturers to provide 'add on' parts, such is the detail shown within this book. Also every conceivable addition from the slat armour sported in Iraq to the mine rollers, angled mine plough, surface mine plough and straight obstacle blade are all presented.

To complement the superb exterior coverage the interior has been broken down in to areas that can be explored in minute detail because the author has taken such care with his subject, not just snapping away but carefully studying the angles and presentation so you can benefit. Every area is covered, even the 6 cylinder 7.2 Ltr Caterpillar engine is shown removed and on a stand, with all the plumbing and ancillary parts attached, the engine bay also comes under Ralph's careful photographic eye, showing rust, oil and general staining. In short I would love to describe every page but the editor would shoot me, so go out and get yourself a copy of this book, also remember this is part one, so what is part two going to throw at us? Testimony to this book is, if you don't have a Stryker kit ready then you will get one, such is the quality of the content.

Available from www.wwpbooks.com or www.bookworldws.com

Ian McGonagle

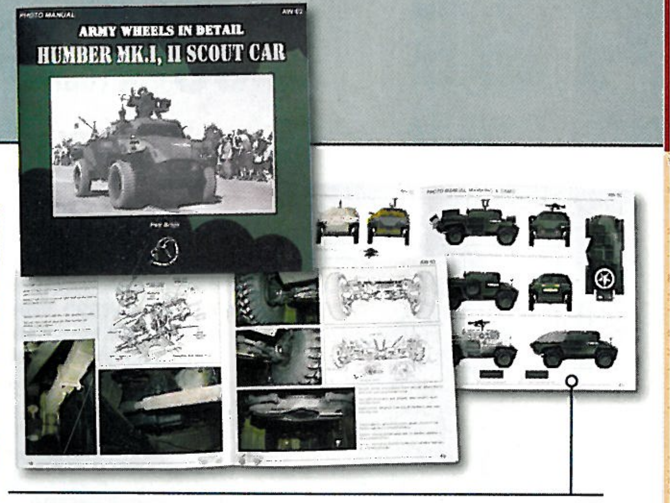
BRITISH ARMOR IN SICILY AND ITALY

DENNIS OLIVER • CONCORD PUBLICATIONS • ISBN: 962-361-138-2

The Italian campaign of WWII is less well covered in terms of British armour than other theatres of war and therefore this latest publication from Concord is a welcome addition to their Armour at War Series of books. It is a natural companion to the two volumes dealing with British armour in N-W Europe. The book follows a familiar format to the rest of the titles in the series. The author begins by outlining the formations that saw action in Sicily & Italy throughout the second half of 1943 and through to the end of hostilities in 1945, which is a valuable potted history of those units. This introduction is the only large block of text in the book, the only other text is that which accompanies the 170 or so photographs that the author has been able to reproduce. A varied amount of armour is covered throughout including carriers, Shermans, Churchills, armoured cars, SP guns including the Priest and even an Armoured Command Vehicle. One particular aspect of the book I like is the inclusion of photographs of 'Funnies' including AVREs, ARKs and bridgelayers. It is easy to forget that it was not just the 79th Armoured Division in N-W Europe that had the monopoly of these vital vehicles.

The photographs all tend to be on the large side providing plenty of detail. The photographs are supplemented by eight pages of coloured drawings. I did spot a couple of errors in the book which are confirmed by the publication on Missing-Lynx (in the Review section) of Errata information, provided by the author. However these do not detract from the excellent coverage that this book provides of a less well known topic. This is very timely release by the publishers given the new Sherman kits on the market and also the Academy Priest.

Keith Goldsworthy



ARMY WHEELS IN DETAIL
HUMBER MK.I, II SCOUT CAR

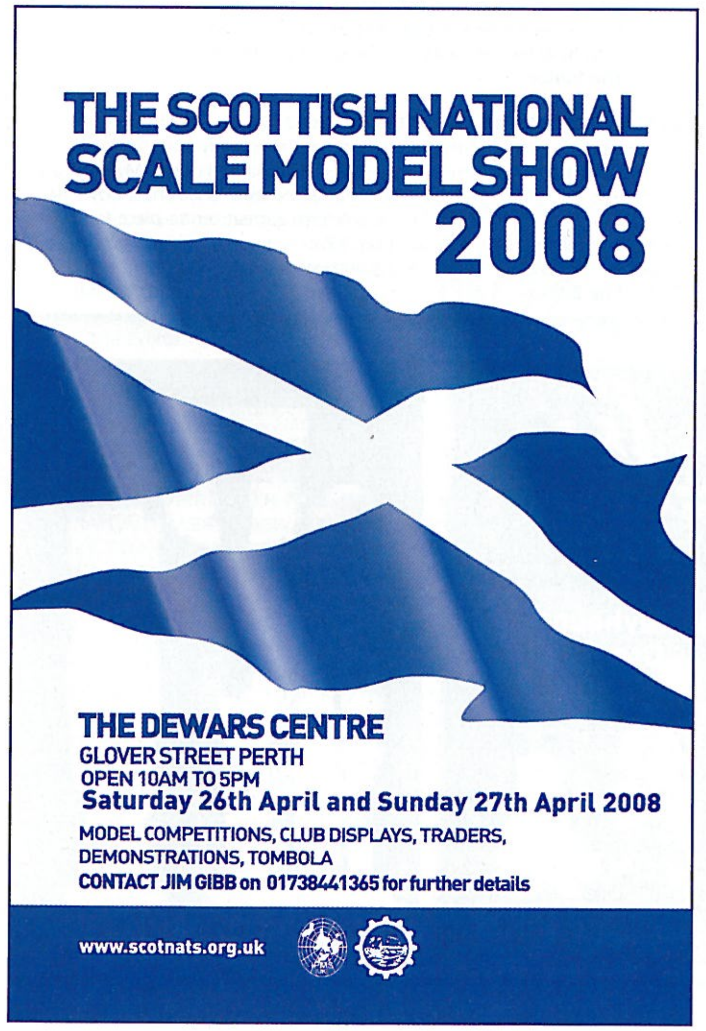
PETR BROJO • CAPRICORN PUBLICATIONS • ISBN 978-903945-0-6

This is a slim, all-colour Czech publication dealing with this small British vehicle. Thirty four pages of colour and black and white photographs, diagrams, colour slides and scale drawings try to give an overview of this overlooked subject. Mixing colour photographs of a museum vehicle and detailed workshop manual diagrams you are taken around, under and into the Humber. The quality of the photographs is not great, more back lighting is needed and it is further hampered by the state of the vehicles restoration, or lack of it, the interior detail is very sparse. Two things help revive your interest in this book, the inclusion of the workshop manual diagrams and the two page colour slides depicting seven vehicles in use between 1943 and 1946.

The text is in Czech and English, it is brief and gives you positional awareness around the subject. A welcome addition to an Allied Armour modeller's library even if it lacks punch and wow factor.

Available from www.skpmodel.eu

Ian McGonagle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The Footman James
SOUTH WEST
Model Engineering, Model Making & Hobbies Exhibition

The 1st Footman James South West Model Engineering, Model Making and Hobbies Exhibition
Royal Bath & West Showground, Shepton Mallet, Somerset

12th – 13th April 2008
9.30am – 5.30pm

The South West Model Engineering, Model Making and Hobbies Exhibition will be held over two days. The event will feature trade and club stands, an on site boating lake and railway, display's of model airplanes, cars, military models and figures with many more being arranged. This event is not limited to just model engineering, we are inviting all areas of model making to participate, this event is a must on any enthusiast's calendar.

The show is mainly an indoor event with outdoor activities, including the on site model railway and boating lake. Car parking is free and there is plenty of on-site catering.

Entrance to the show will be £8 adults and £7 concessions. Accompanied children under 16 are free of charge.

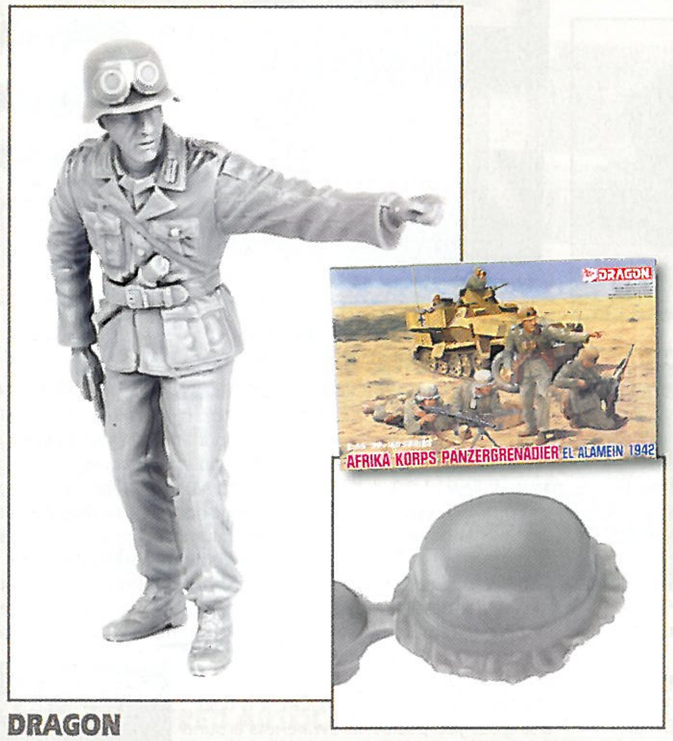
For further information on trade or club stands please contact Nadine Lingard at *Nadine@nwe.co.uk* for general enquiries email *debbieb@nwe.co.uk* or ring 0117 907 1000 or fax 0117 907 1001.

Model Military International has five pairs of tickets to give away for the first five correct answers to this simple question:

Which model show did the Editor attend in the January issue of MMI?

Answers to: Footman James Competition, ADH Publishing, Doolittle Mill, Doolittle lane, Totternhoe, Bedfordshire LU6 1QX
Entries limited to one per household/person.
All entries must be received by 15th February 2008

Figures - A round-up of the latest figure sets on release...



DRAGON

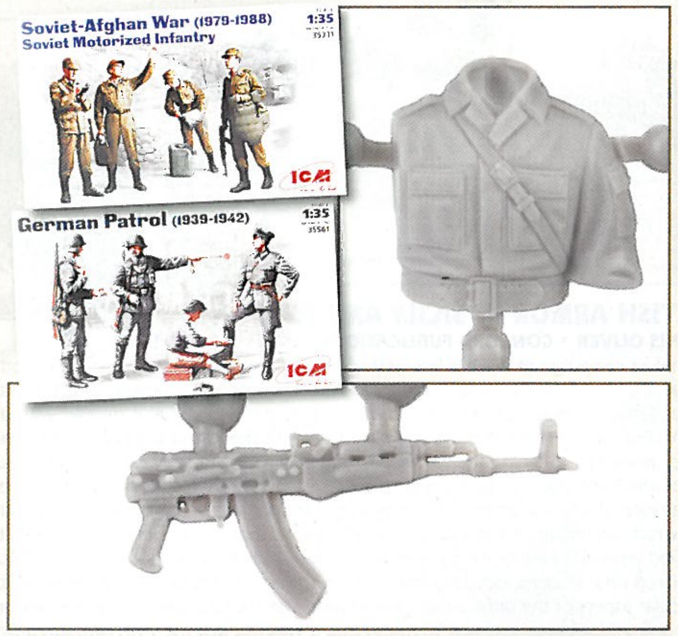
1:35 AFRIKA KORPS PANZER GRENADIERS, EL ALAMEIN 1942
ITEM NO.6389

Dragon's latest set of figures will certainly be a welcome edition for anyone interested modelling the North African campaign of WWII. This set consists of four very nicely detailed Panzergrenadiers, two manning an MG-34, one in the act of reloading his Kar-98 and an officer pointing to a target in the distance. I particularly liked the way the cloth covers have been rendered on the helmets of the machine gun crew. As usual Dragon include a separate sprue containing the weapons and in this case we get a spare MG-42, MP-40, MP-44 and two Panzerfausts!

The only niggle I had with this otherwise excellent set of figures was that when building the officer for the accompanying photo, the attachment points for the sprues were on the back of his legs, in amongst the creases on the back of the trousers. This will prove very fiddly to clean-up and a great deal of care will be needed to avoid destroying the surrounding detail.

Available from all good model shops.

9/10 - The Editor


Soviet-Afghan War (1979-1988)
Soviet Motorized Infantry
1:35
ICM
German Patrol (1939-1942)
1:35
ICM

ICM

1:35 INJECTION PLASTIC FIGURE SETS
SOVIET-AFGHAN WAR 1979-1988 SOVIET MOTORIZED INFANTRY ITEM NO.35331

ICM have been making a name for themselves producing some interesting figure sets and the latest we have received are no different. The first features four riflemen in non-action poses, and these will be great for adding a sense of scale to a BMP, BTR or T-55 for example.

The quality of the moulding is good and the detail crisp, good enough that one of MMI's regular contributor's has snapped them up for a future project! Certainly most welcome in a topic not exactly flush with figures.

Available from www.hannants.co.uk and www.moduni.de

8/10 - The Editor

GERMAN PATROL 1939-1942 ITEM NO.35561

The second set from ICM this month contains four 'early war' German figures, and again these are nicely detailed with natural poses. My particular favourite is the officer having his boots polished by a 'shoe shine boy'. He has that air of arrogance and I think will form a great centre-piece for a vignette or diorama. Superb stuff from ICM.

Available from www.hannants.co.uk and www.moduni.de

9/10 - The Editor

LEGENDS

1:35 US M8 GREYHOUND CREW SET
ITEM NO.LF0114

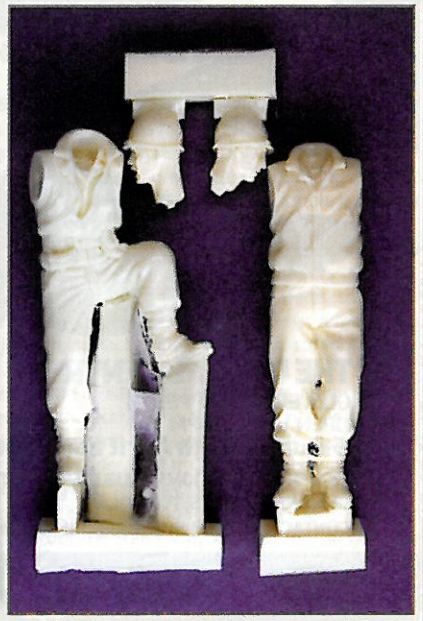
With all their many vehicle conversions it can easily be forgotten that Legends have a huge and varied range of highly detailed resin figures. New to the range is a crew for either the Tamiya or Italeri M8 armoured car.

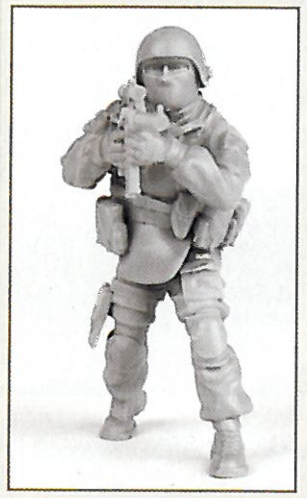
Cast in the usual and tediously all too familiar 'pointing pose' the figures are in conversation and gesturing to somewhere in the distance. The pale resin means that the beautifully detailed figures only really come alive once an undercoat has been applied, and then the detail really pops out at you. All new Allied figures are most welcome and these will certainly look good gracing your next hunk of olive drab. Recommended.

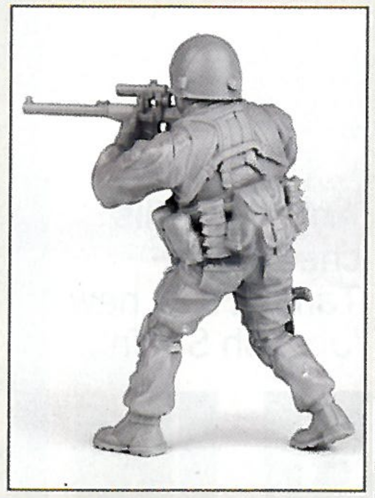
Available from Friendship Models

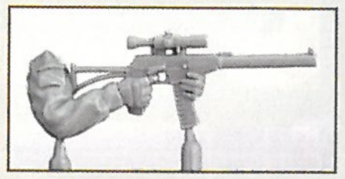
8/10 - Graeme Carruthers

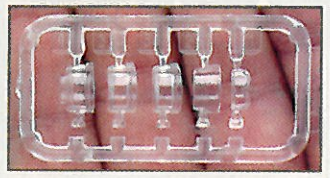
productions
LEGEND
US M8 Greyhound
Crew Set
LF0114 www.www-legend.co.kr











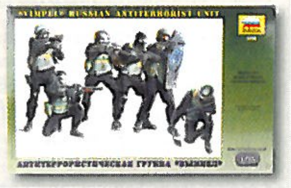
ZVEZDA

1:35 'VIMPEL' RUSSIAN ANTI-TERRORIST UNIT
ITEM NO.3598

And now for something a little different from Zvezda, a set figures depicting six members of a modern Russian Anti-Terrorist Unit. The figures are all in dynamic poses, as they are about to assault a cinema or theatre perhaps? The parts are fairly well moulded, if a little heavy in the detailing, I did however like the way the weapons have been moulded integrally with hands and arm, this means the hands and fingers grip the guns properly. Also included in the box is a sprue containing clear visors and goggles along with a small waterslide decal sheet containing the Panther picture for the riot shield and a strip of silver for the mirror one of the members is using to check around a corner. I have to admit that the helmeted heads do remind me of how Shrek looked, when he goes to rescue the sleeping beauty wearing a suit of armour! Certainly an interesting choice of subject, but I can't help feeling that by the way they have been painted on the back of the box, the 'chunky' look of the uniforms and odd looking helmets they look like something from the Warhammer 'Space Marine' range.

Available from all good model shops

7/10 - The Editor


'VIMPEL' RUSSIAN ANTITERRORIST UNIT
АНТИТЕРРОРИСТИЧЕСКАЯ ГРУППА «ВЫМПЕЛ»

MASTER BOX

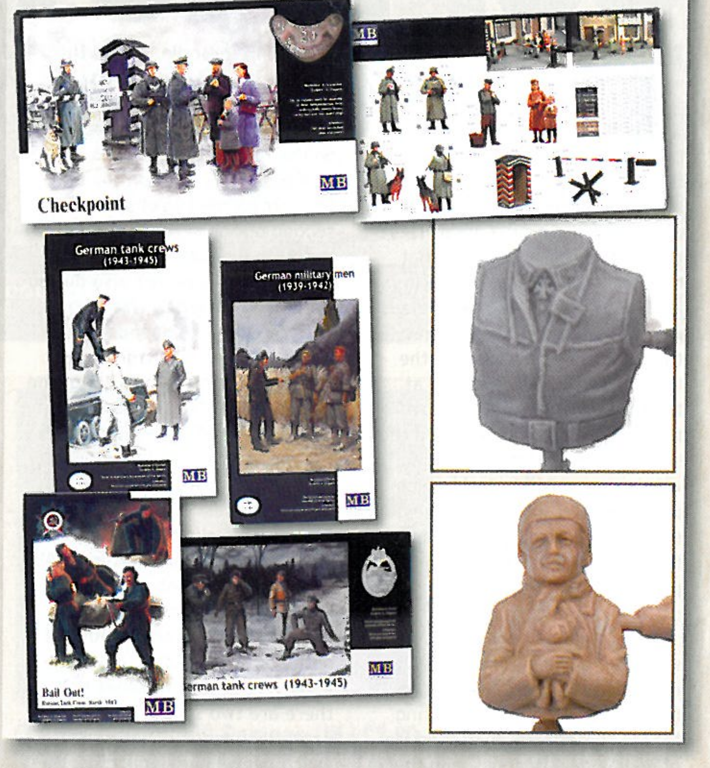
1:35 INJECTION PLASTIC FIGURE SETS
GERMAN TANK CREWS 1943-45 ITEM NO.3508
GERMAN MILITARY MEN 1039-42 ITEM NO.3510
GERMAN TANK CREWS 1943-45 ITEM NO.3507
BAIL OUT! RUSSIAN TANK CREW KURSK, 1943 ITEM NO.3532
CHECKPOINT ITEM NO.MB3527

This month we have received a whole host of sets from Master Box, Including an action packed set of four Russian tank crewmen, bailing out from the their burning T-34 and a Checkpoint set which contains a family of refugees having their papers scrutinized by some very officious looking field police. In this set we get some bonus items in the form of a road barrier and hedgehog tank-trap and one of those classic 'stripy' guards hut. It's always good to see manufacturers producing something a little different and especially when they include some nicely detailed civilian figures.

Overall the moulding is pretty good, if a little on the soft side, somewhat reminiscent to the style Tamiya produce their figures in (take look at the child figure holding the toy bear), some of the parts did suffer from a bit of flash here and there, but not enough to detract from these imaginative figure sets.

Distributed through www.creativemodels.com

8/10 - The Editor


Checkpoint
MB
German tank crews (1943-1945)
German military men (1939-1942)
Bail Out!
German tank crews (1943-1945)

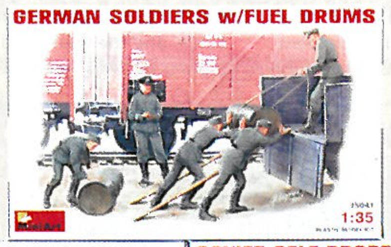
MINIART

1:35 INJECTION PLASTIC FIGURE SETS
GERMAN SOLDIERS WITH FUEL DRUMS ITEM NO.35041
GERMAN ARTILLERY CREW ITEM NO.35029
SOVIET SELF-PROPELLED GUN CREW ITEM NO.35027
SOVIET 76.2MM GUN ZIS-3 WITH CREW ITEM NO.35032

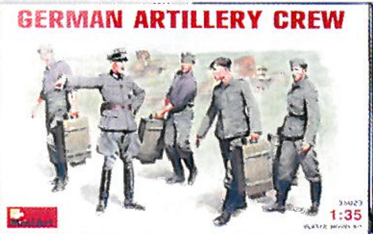
MiniArt are continuing to produce some excellent models, from the superb T-70 and T-80 light tanks and SU-76 through to the imaginative range of injection plastic buildings. For me, it's their imaginative range of figures that spring to mind when I hear the name MiniArt mentioned. I love the realistic poses, from the expressions on the faces to the folds of the clothing, which have all been faithfully reproduced. For example, the figures pushing the 45 gallon drums really give the feel the drums are heavy, as do the arillery crewmen carrying the ammo crates, none of them being able to hold an '88' round with out stretched arms. Sometimes I don't think figure sculptors appreciate the weight of some of these items, such as a full jerrycan, tank ammunition or even how heavy personal weapons are.

Available from all good model shops, distributed in the UK by Creative Models.

9/10 - The Editor



SOVIET 76,2 mm GUN ZIS-3
w/CREW
35032
1:35



SOVIET SELF-PROPELLED GUN CREW
1:35

RUSSIAN HEAVY TANK JS-2 MODEL 1944 ChKZ
432
TAMIYA

Andrew Willis checks out Tamiya's all new 'Joseph Stalin'.

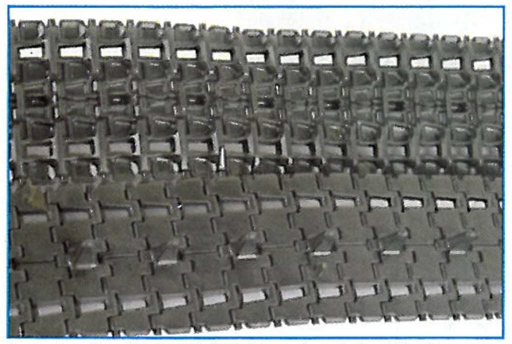
SUPER STALIN

The very first 1:35 model I ever made was a Tamiya Panther A, given as a Christmas present when I was thirteen years old. That was thirty one years ago and Tamiya have thankfully released new kits at a steady rate since then. There was a little scare last year that they were pulling out of 1:35 in favour of 1:48. Their latest release is of the late war Russian heavy the JS-2; they have chosen the later 1944 variant produced at the famous Chelyabinsk-Kirov factory. This variant replaced the stepped front plate and hatch with a sloped front glacis which offered better protection; the gun mantlet was also lengthened. This later variant was seen in many photographs taken of the Russian capture of Berlin.

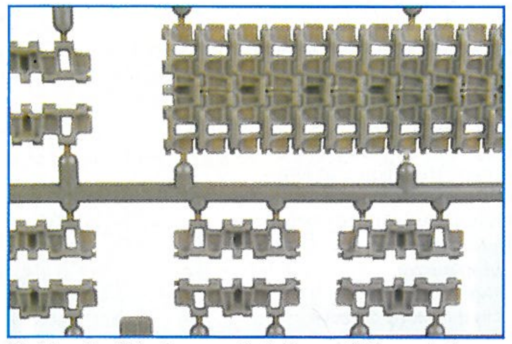
The actual model consists of six sprues of parts, a lower hull tub, a set of vinyl tracks and a little bag containing a piece of string for the tow cables, an etched fret of engine deck screens, and the now usual polycaps. The last item is another small bag containing the decal sheet. The decal sheet gives four options: the first is for tank 432 of the 7th Independent Guards Heavy Tank Brigade during April 1945 in Berlin. This is the scheme featured on the box top as it is the most colourful option, having white air recognition bands on the turret top and sides, as well as a white bear on top of a red star on the turret sides. The second option is for Tank 13 of the 88th Independent Guards Heavy Tank Regiment also during April 1945 in Berlin. This also features the white bands on the turret, but narrower this time. The third option is Tank 113 of the Czechoslovak 1st Tank Brigade during May 1945 in Prague, with the red, white and blue national roundel on both sides of the turret. The last option is for tank 424 of the Polish 4th Heavy Tank Regiment during April 1945 in Germany. All options are for a plain Russian Green vehicle - no winter white or camouflage options here.

Moving onto the sprues now, there are two sprue As which naturally enough cover items which need to be duplicated; these are wheels, suspension arms, fuel drums and half of the gun barrel and muzzle brake. Sprue B holds the turret top, bottom and front bulge, and the upper hull in two pieces; this will make the earlier JS-2 or a JSU model possible in the future. Sprue C holds the rest of the pieces needed to complete the model such as rear plate, crew figures and gun mantlet. Lastly there are two sprue Ds which contain all the link and length tracks and a guide to make the track sag for the top run, which is a very nice inclusion. Each track link has two indented ejector pin marks which can be filled if the modeller so wishes.

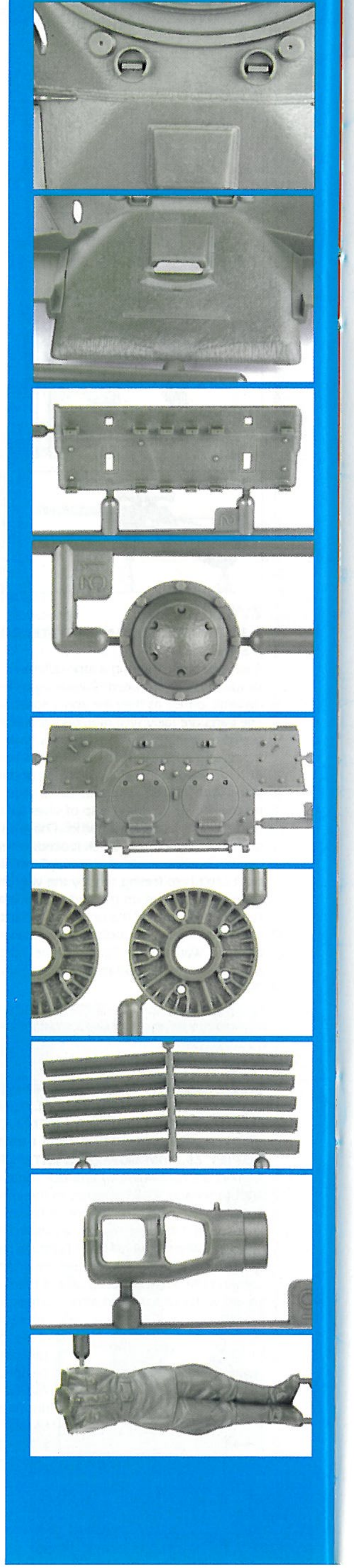
All the parts are crisply moulded, the weld seams are very nicely done and the cast texture is restrained and not overdone - some may want to beef it up a little, especially on the turret sides. The rear plate has the circular hatches engraved to just the right depth. All the parts look easy to clip off the sprues with some very fine attachment points on the smaller detailed parts, and lastly the instructions are clear and precise. So another very good model from Tamiya, and one which Dragon will have to go some to beat when they finally release their announced Premium upgrade JS-2. Do I like it? Of course I do - I just wish more things had stayed the same in thirty one years. ■

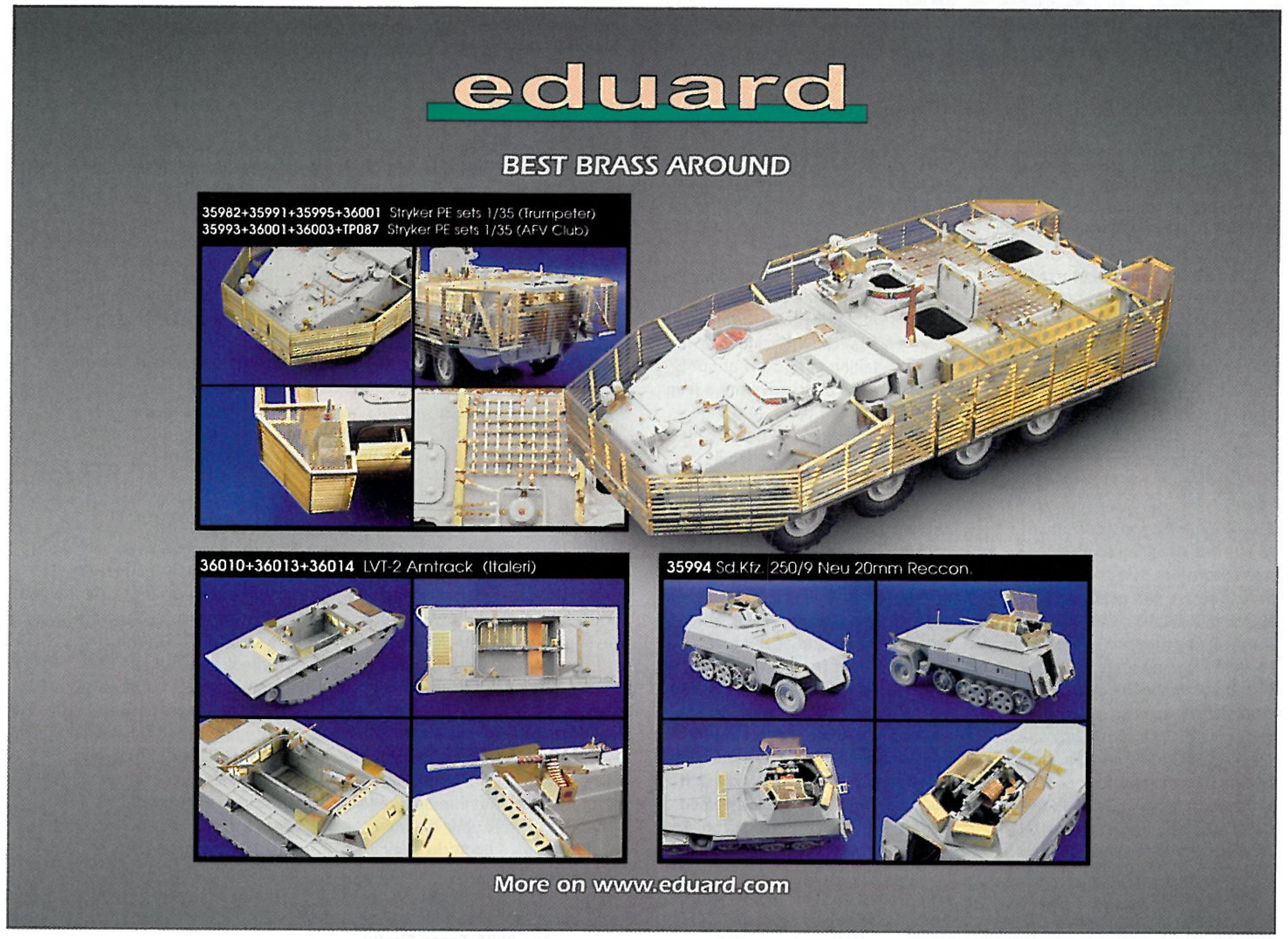


Tamiya have thoughtfully included both one piece vinyl and injection moulded 'link and length' tracks in this JS-2 kit.



The link and length tracks are moulded in the same light brown plastic as used on the earlier Char BI bis. Long lengths are supplied for the bottom run and individual links for the top. Formers are included to help replicate the correct sag between the return rollers.

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ONE FOR THE MANUFACTURERS

Is it possible for Tamiya and other kit makers to reduce the number of runners that hold each component on a sprue? This would reduce the cutting off and more importantly the cleaning up of excess plastic that modellers have to do. Some components have to be cut off five times. Surely one or two connections should be enough to allow the plastic to fill the mould? Or is it a problem of air bubbles stopping plastic flow?

Peter Lynch

Ed says; I think you really need to put this question to the manufacturers. We as a model magazine are end users such as yourself, we have no affiliation or influence as to what, how or why they do certain things.
I do know they don't do it deliberately to mess us about.
We as modellers constantly ask for better detailed models, which means that the moulds needed to produce these complex and highly detailed parts. If you have noticed on the parts in Dragon kits have these little 'ejector pips' save the part have those unwanted and unsightly ejector pin marks ruining the part. I guess Dragon have decided that we would rather cut off and some more of these than spend the time filling all of those circular ejector pin marks form the surface of the model.

GREAT NORTH ROADS

As a subscriber from issue 2 I thought it was time to write in. Firstly I would like to congratulate you on a superb magazine. I've been modelling in 1:35 for about 5 years after a friend gave me a jeep to assemble and paint, and that was enough to get me hooked on the hobby and MMI has helped me improve my modelling so much. A couple of years ago my niece and nephew gave me some of their pocket money to buy a 'Steps' front vignette from Great North Roads at The War and Peace show for my birthday. I'd got it to an almost finished stage, and at Duxford showed Simon from GNR. Some pictures I'd taken with the camera on my mobile phone, and was asked to send him some more. I sent some via email and was surprised and happy to get a reply to ask if one of my pictures could be used for the artwork on the box top. So this letter is to say a big thank you to everyone who has contributed and passed on their helpful tips and hints. Long may it continue. Thank you again MMI, and especially Simon at Great North Roads.

Rob Impey

MESSAGE FROM THE EDITOR

LONG TERM FEATURE

Whilst I was attending Scale Model World in Telford last November, I was asked the question if we would consider featuring something along the lines of a long term project. At first I wasn't too keen because I tend to build fairly quickly and I know I would get bored working on a prolonged project, however after some consideration, I thought I might well be a good idea, so to begin with will have started a feature in the Last Post Techniques on building a simple diorama base to display a single vehicle. Over the coming months I will also be getting stuck into a major IDF conversion from Legend.

See you again on February 7th!

Spud
John 'Spud' Murphy

SCORES ON THE DOORS

First off I believe you brought up a good point about the review of model kits being an impact upon the shopkeeper's stock. I personally use your magazine as a primary source for reviews of the new model kits. I do hope most readers realize an honest review of a kit shouldn't be sacrificed to increase sales, but that's not what you're saying. In that same mind I have a question about your Incoming quick reviews. I do know they are reviewed by different people but I can't understand the score out of 10 given at the end for a couple reviews. The "1:35 Tasca Firefly Turret Upgrade ABM-016B" got a glowing review as I read it found absolutely nothing wrong - even mentioning the appeal to purists - but received an 8/10. Okay, for comparison (and why I'm writing) the Cromwell Models "1:72 Combat 72 Shot Kal" reviewed very well - "no instructions so references will have to be found" - At the end saying Very Highly recommended comes with 10/10 rating.
So where does one kit that has no instructions versus one with instructions both saying quality is top-notch have a 2 point difference? I'd at least knock half a point off for the kit without instructions. (Even if they always do this - that shouldn't be an excuse - perhaps enough complaints would result in a change in their packaging in the future?)

Brian Hensley

Ed says; All valid points Brian, I agree that some of the reviews are a bit contradictory and will address this for future issues. However they are only meant as a guide and are in the end the opinion of the individual reviewer.

RECOMMENDED READING

ISRAELI WILD & CRUEL CATS PART 1 ACHZARIT AND PUMA

SABINGA MARTIN PUBLICATIONS
ISBN 965-90347-0-9

First published in 2001, this title is my current reading material as I have been bitten by the bug to build something Israeli again. This sixty two page softback is packed full of black and white detail shots, colour side profiles, 1:35 scale drawings and sketches all help to make this a one stop reference source for anyone wanting to detail either of these great looking IDF vehicles. At present I'm not sure if this book is still in print, but if you see one about, grab it!

ISRAELI WILD & CRUEL CATS
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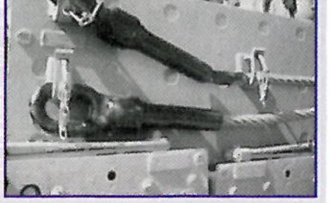
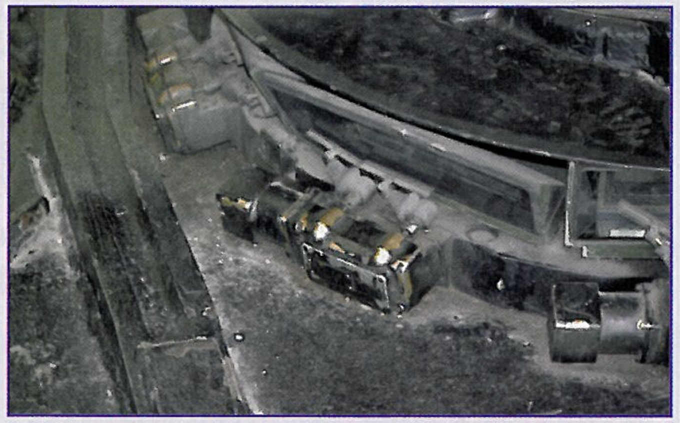


RANDOM REFERENCE!

BRASS RUBBINGS

Here's an interesting shot of a British Chieftain Mk 11 at the Tank Museum, Bovington. Of note is the amount of brass showing on the cupola periscope wiper-motors, certainly something to think about when painting your next Chieftain. Note also the boot prints around the top edge of the cupola, a perfect excuse to break out the Calibre 35 boot print rubber stamps.
As a foot note I can't wait to see how good the Tank Museum will look once its multi-million pound makeover is complete later this year.



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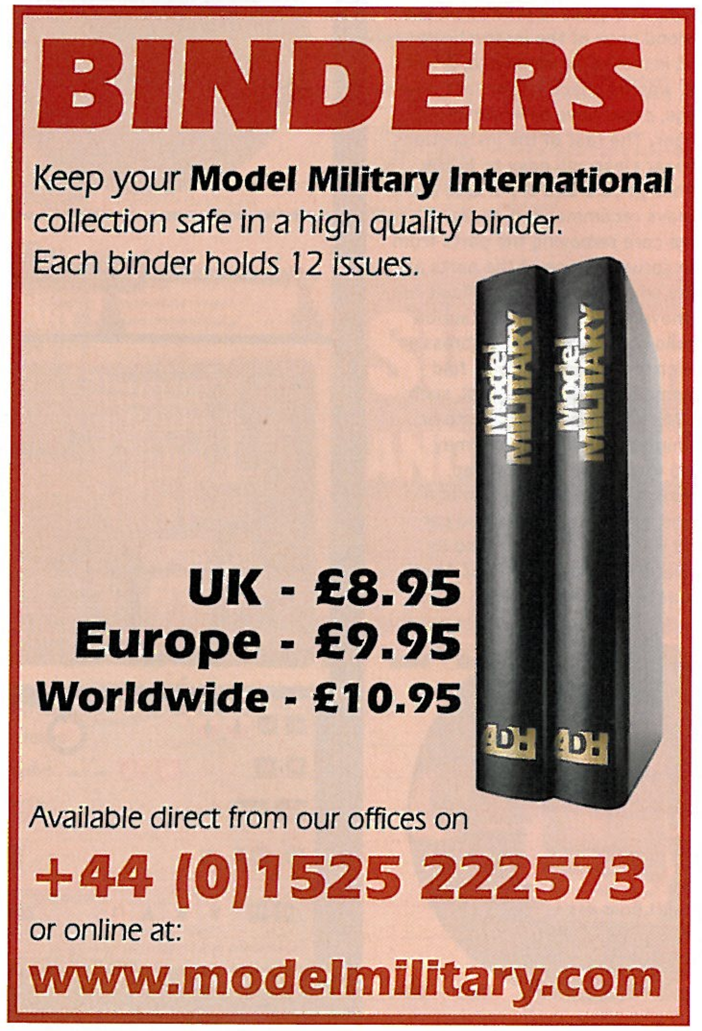
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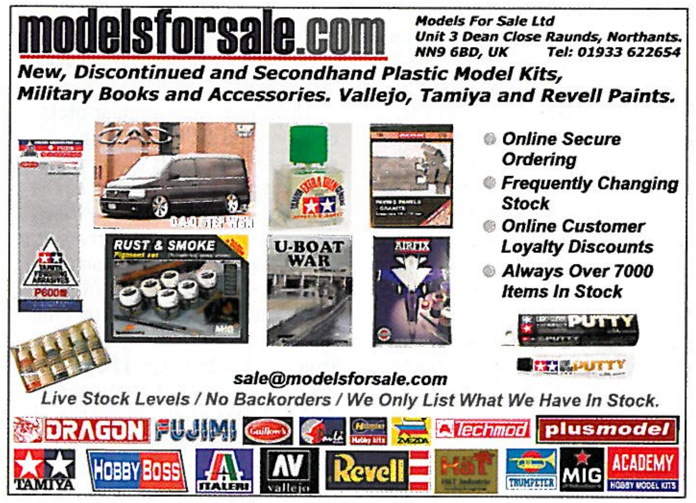
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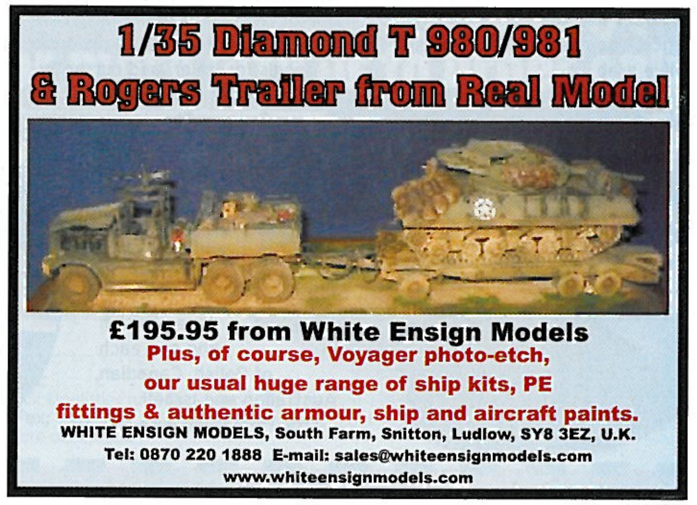
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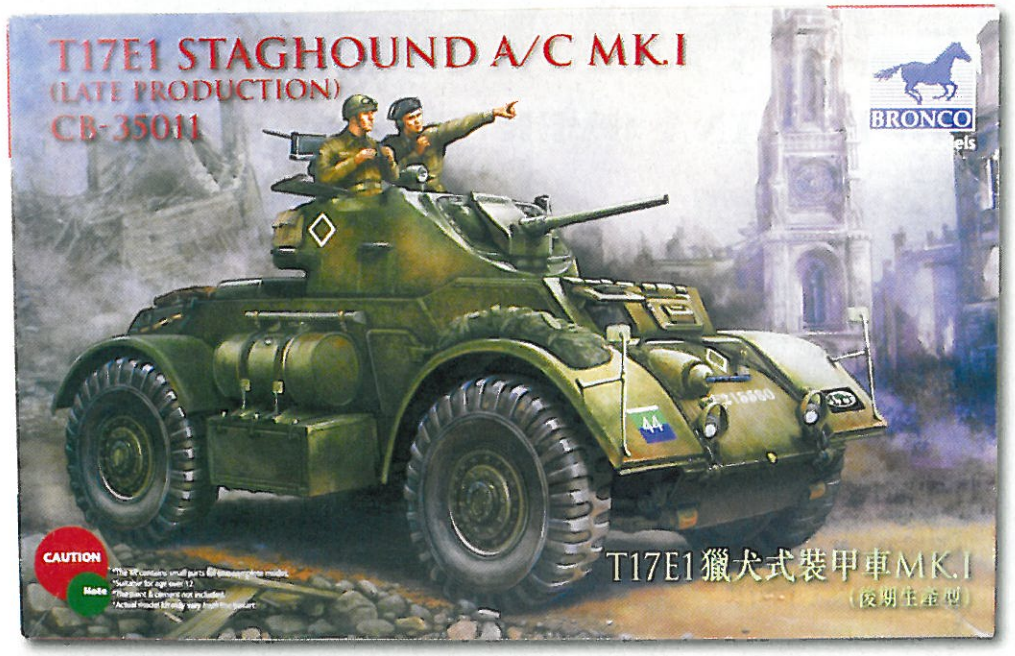


SIMPLY STUNNING DEER

Andrew Willis takes a belated look at first of the Staghound armoured cars from Bronco.

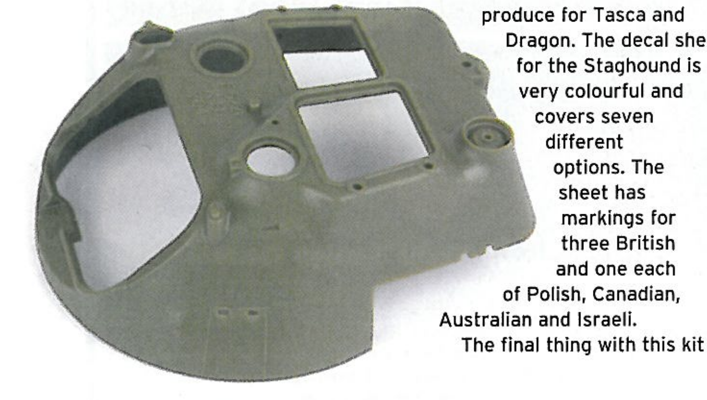
If anybody doubted that this is truly the 'Golden Age' for modelling then surely this, and the soon to be released Italeri version, must dispel all doubts. I for one did not expect to ever see a Staghound in plastic, let alone two from different manufacturers; add to this the fact that Bronco have announced an MK3 to follow, then I am left pinching myself. Bronco would not use the turret from the MK3 to bring out a Crusader by any chance, would they?

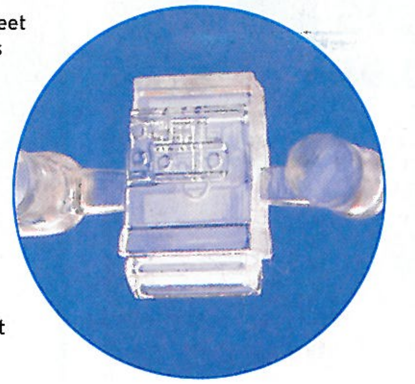
Getting back to this kit - and boy what a kit this is! It is really amazing how high the standard is from Bronco who have only been marketing 1:35 models for a few years.

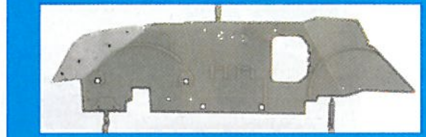
When you open the box you are greeted with a very high quality product well worth the asking price. The main parts are on six olive drab sprues, and all the parts are well-detailed and very cleanly moulded. In fact some of the parts are so fine and the detail so good it actually stopped me in my tracks for a while.

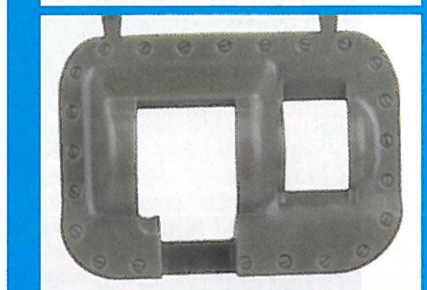
There is a sprue of clear parts covering the periscopes and windscreens - this is the first area I am not totally happy with as the windscreen wipers are moulded on to the windscreens. Next there are two etched brass sheets, one with various parts to detail the model and a smaller one with letters and numbers to reproduce casting labels. It is a shame that Bronco did not put a pair of windscreen wipers on the etch sprue. Then there is a very nicely turned aluminium gun barrel for the 37mm main gun. The decal sheet is printed by Cartograf from Italy, one of the best printers of decals today. Cartograf used to produce decals for Italeri and currently produce for Tasca and Dragon. The decal sheet for the Staghound is very colourful and covers seven different options. The sheet has markings for three British and one each of Polish, Canadian, Australian and Israeli.

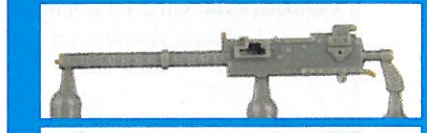
The final thing with this kit I am not too happy with is the painting and decal placement guide. The guide is printed on the second page of the instructions and is incredibly small and, given the wasted space on the last page, could have been printed larger. The rest of the instructions appear clear and easy to follow, although care and dry-fitting are always recommended. Please also take care removing the parts from the sprues - some of the parts are very small and do look difficult to remove. My last word of caution would be with the etched brass which looks a bit tricky to fold - some form of folding tool, such as Mission Models Etch Mate or Cammett's Hold and Fold may help for this kit. So to recap, this is a stunning rendition of a large, impressive armoured car and is very much welcomed by me and hopefully plenty of Allied modellers out there. ■

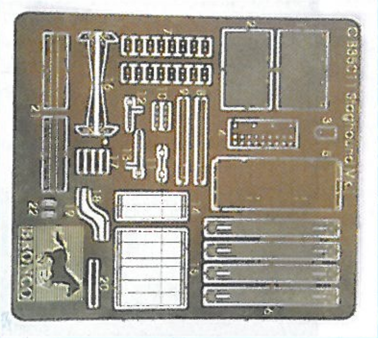


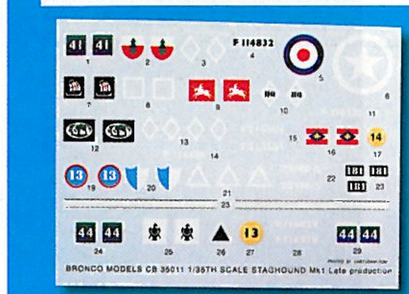








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- Dragon 1:35 Flakpanzer I
» and more...

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- Amazing 1:72 Berlin diorama
- Tamiya's 1:48 VW
- Phil Stutcinskas's Euro winning Panzer IV
- Eastern Express KV-14
- Heavy Humvee full size reference
- Mig Productions' Hi-Lux pick-up truck
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- Tamiya 1:48 KV-1
» and more...

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- Canadian Leopard C2 reference
» and more...

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- Italeri's AB-41 armoured car
- MAFVA Nationals
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» and more...

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- Italeri's latest Amtrac the LVT 2
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- Anderson's ultimate StuG IV
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- Canadian Leopard C2's in Afghanistan
- Tamiya's new Renault UE Tractor
- Dragon's T34/76 in a winter setting
» and more...

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- Academy small scale Dragon Wagon
- Academy IMagach 7A Conversion
- Dragon 1:35 M1A2 SEP Abrams
- M4A2 76mm resin conversion
- 1:15 Panther Ausf A
- Cyber Hobby T-34/76 STZ
- Lion Roar M2 mega-etched brass detail set
- Sherman reference photos
» and more...

Issue 20
- Dragon Kingtiger with zimmerit
- AFV Club 1:48 late Tiger I diorama
- Italeri MH-60K Blackhawk
- Dragon 10.5cm armed Stug III
- Step by step guide - Tamiya 1:48 GMC
- GMC reference photos
- Italeri 1:48 Chinook
- Iwata TR-1 airbrush
- S&T 120mm US Para
» and more...

Issue 21
- Dragon Panzer II Ausf.F
- Dragon Panzer II Ausf.A
- Cromwell Nagmachon conversion
- Tamiya Hetzer
- Tamiya M8 HMC
- Tamiya Leopard 2A6
- Academy M7 'Priest' HMC
- Italeri Bofors Gun
- Trumpeter Stryker
» and more...

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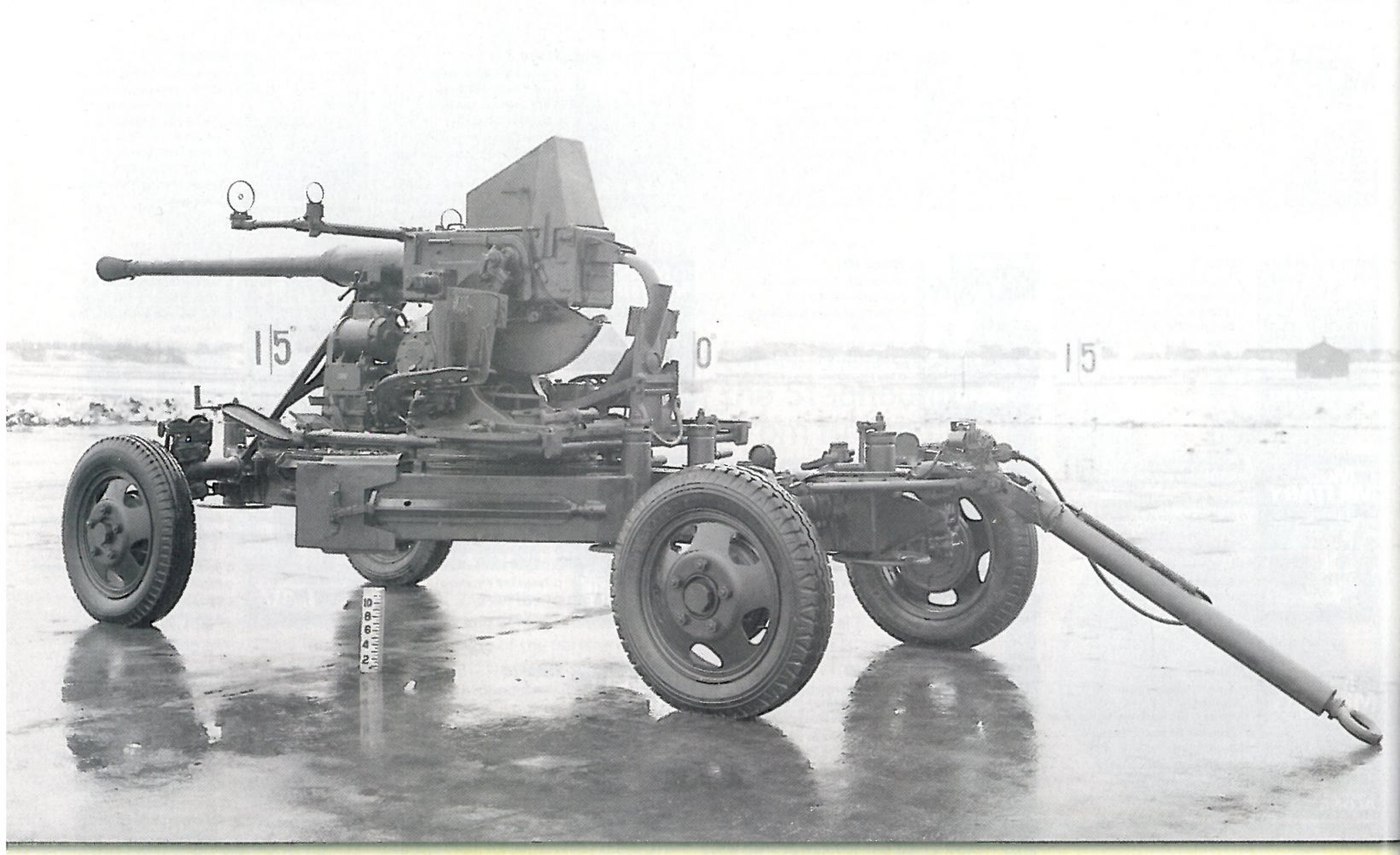


The 40mm Bofors was the standard midsized Allied anti-aircraft gun during WWII. The early US weapons used the M2 carriage, as modelled by Italeri, while later guns used the M2AI carriage shown here. Many of the M2 carriages were subsequently upgraded to the M2AI standard.

THE UNIVERSAL GUN

David Doyle offers us some fascinating wartime photos of the Bofors 40mm gun, perfect for anyone needing some inspiration to start Italeri's new kit...

The 40mm Bofors has become the quintessential anti-aircraft artillery piece of WWII – perhaps of the 20th Century. Developed in Sweden beginning in 1929, by 1932 the design had been perfected. Firing a 2lb shell to an effective range of 12,500 feet at an average rate of 80-100 rounds per minute, the weapon drew the attention of armed forces world-wide.

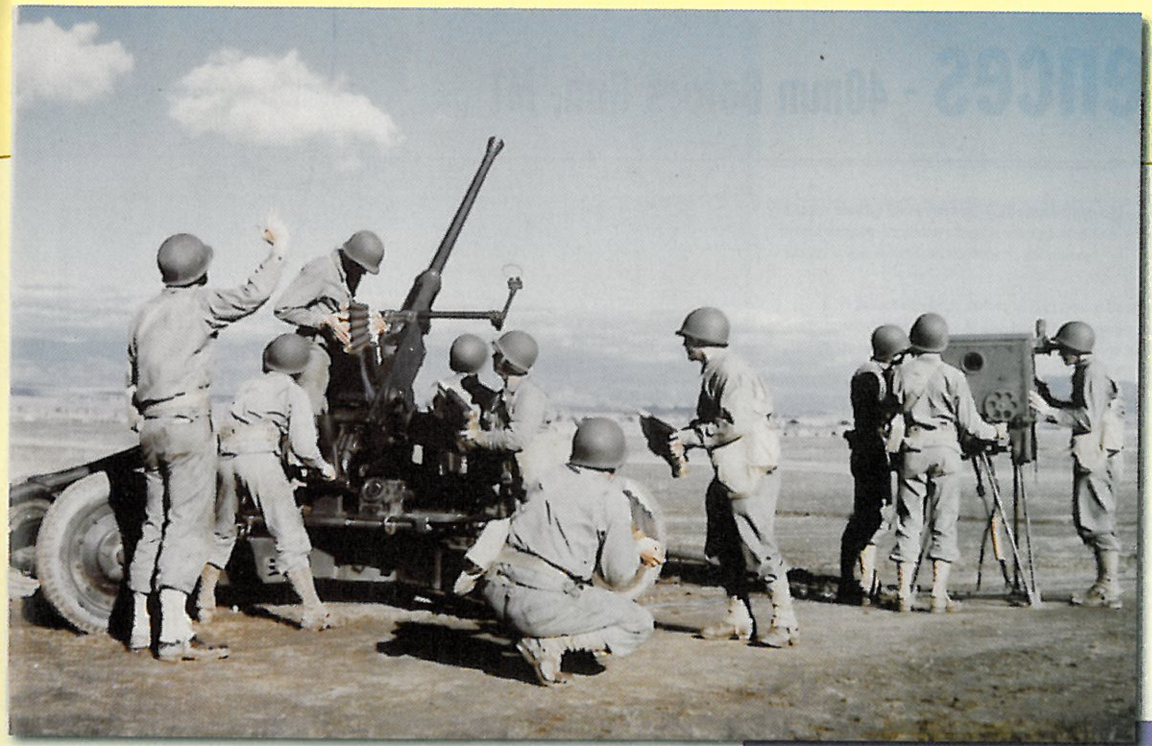
The British Army began testing the weapon in 1937, and found it to be superior to other weapons. A license to manufacture the weapon was acquired from Bofors, and teams of engineers set out to convert the weapon's engineering from metric to imperial measurements. At the same time, efforts were made to speed production as Bofors had envisioned that each weapon would be hand-assembled whereas the wartime climate in Britain demanded mass-production. Ultimately the gun became standardized as the QF (Quick Fire) 40mm Mark III.

Across the Atlantic, the Bofors came to the attention of the US Navy Bureau of Ordnance, who purchased a twin mount weapon directly from Bofors in 1940. The superiority of the gun was obvious, and while negotiating for manufacturing rights with Bofors, the Navy also obtained the Imperial measurement based drawings from Britain.

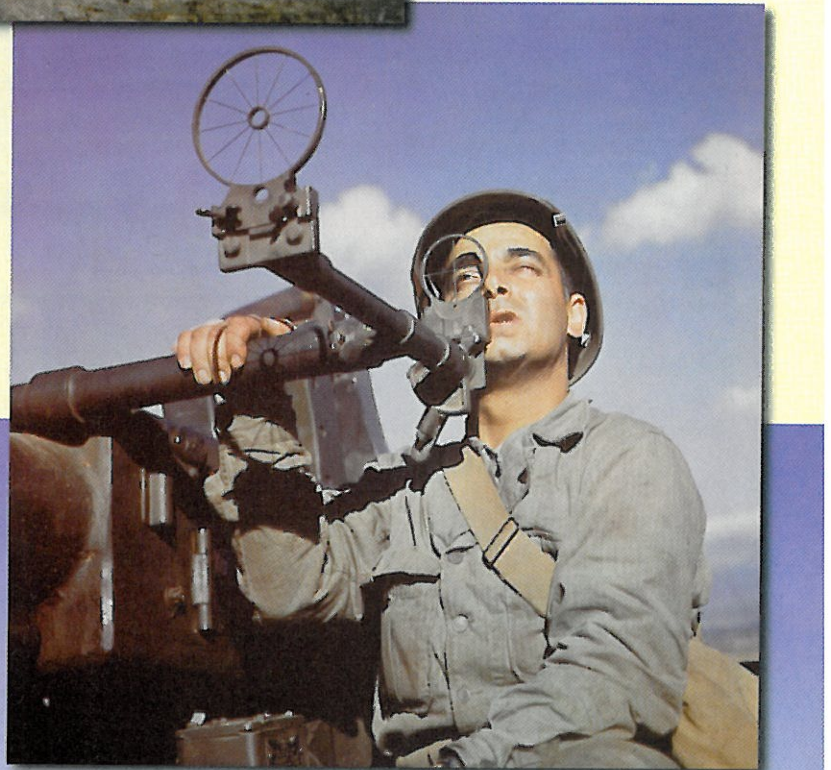
The US Army had obtained British-built examples of the Bofors and, like the Navy, selected the weapon as their standard, noting a definite improvement over even the relatively new 37mm automatic cannon. Ordnance Committee Minutes of 29 May 1941 designated the gun as Standard, with carriage M1. On December 4th of the same year, the M2 carriage was made Standard and the M1 became Substitute Standard.

In order to supply the demand of both the Army and the Navy, as well as Allied nations, Chrysler began producing the Bofors in huge numbers.

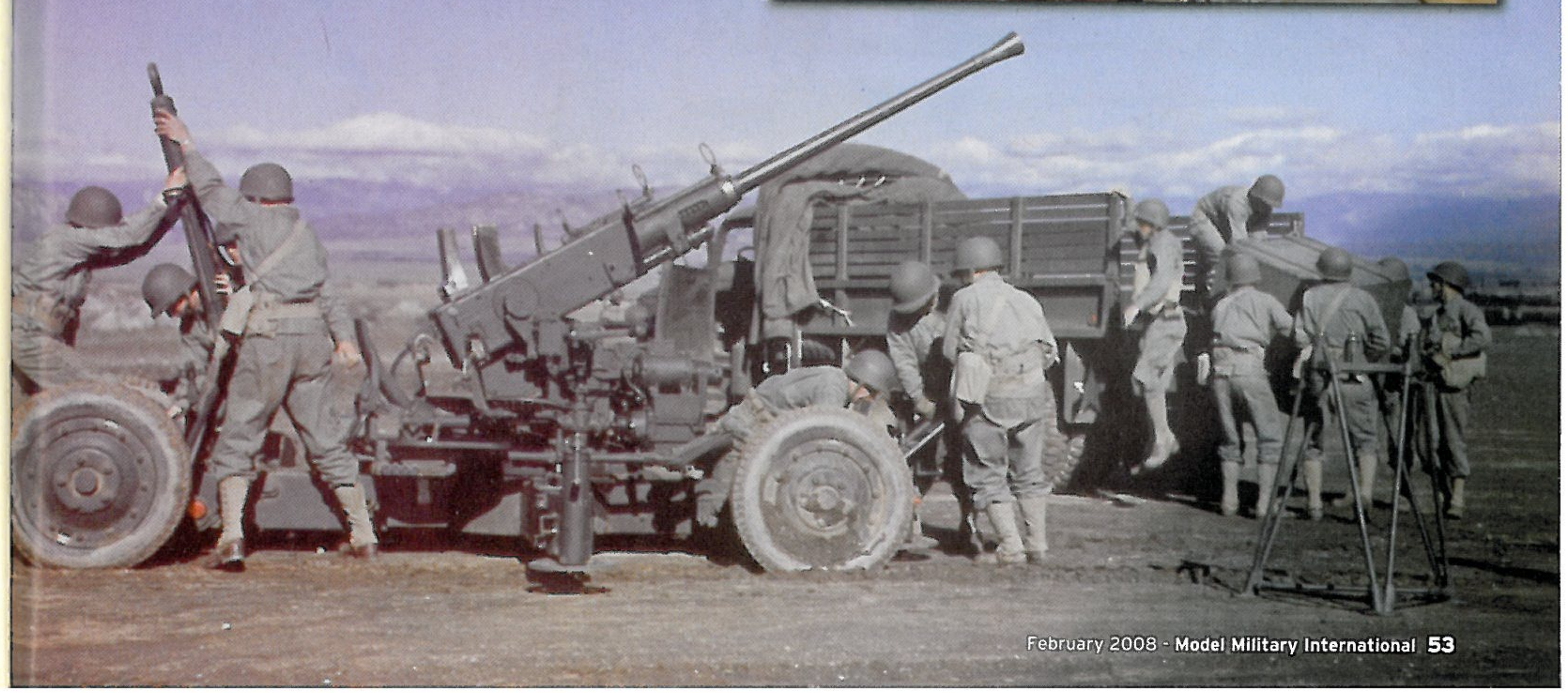
The first of the weapons left the Chrysler assembly line in June 1941. The effort that went into this is staggering. Twelve Chrysler plants, along with some 2000 subcontractors, were involved in the weapon's production. Ultimately 30,095 air-cooled single guns and 14,442 twin guns were built, along with over 120,000 barrels. ■



◀ Seven men man this MI Bofors as three more crew the M5AI gun director. The weapon was fed by four-round clips. Ejection was simple, when the breech opens, the spent casing falls out the bottom.

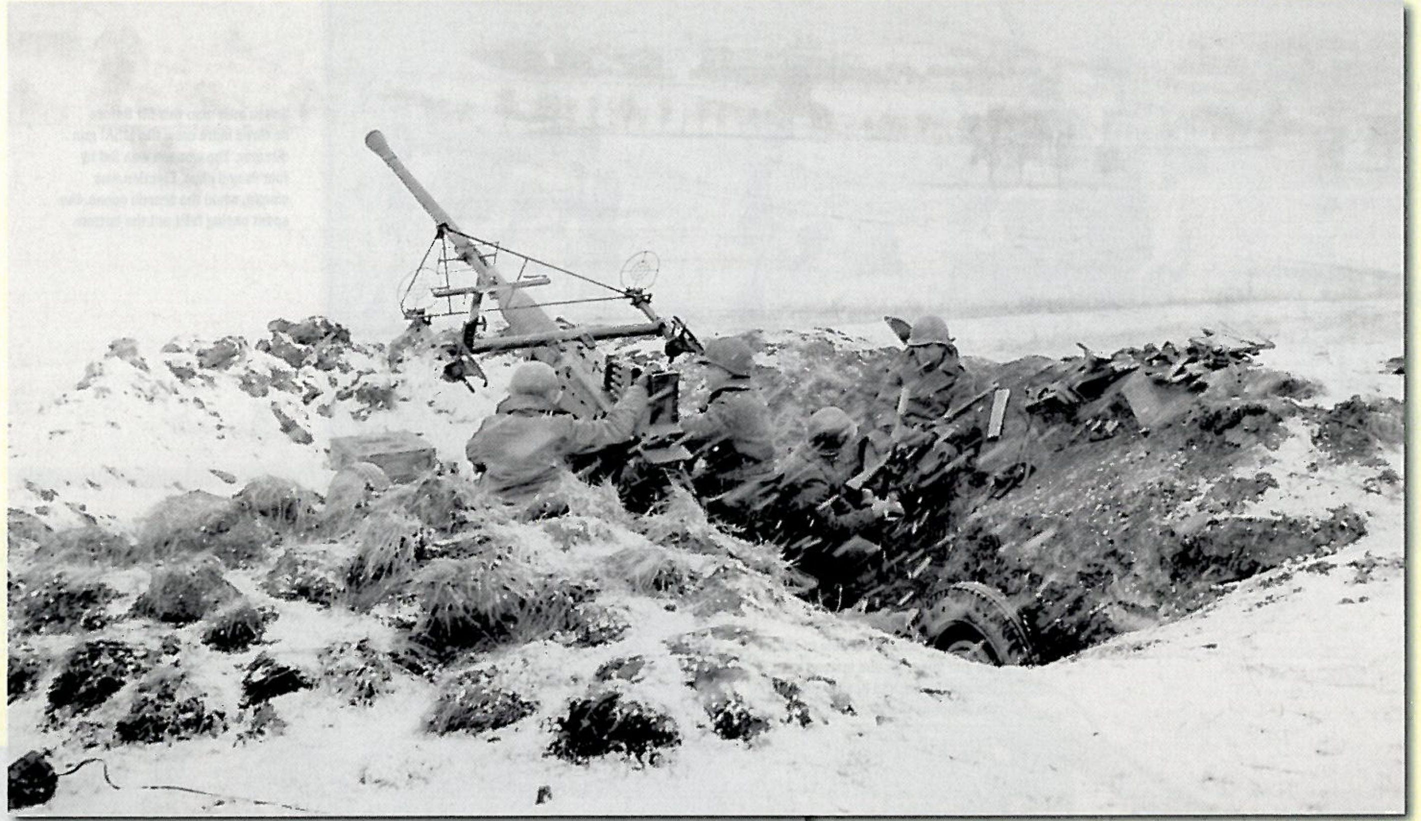


However, in the heat of combat crews were not always able to set up the gun directors and instead used the simple ring and bead sights on the weapons themselves. ▶

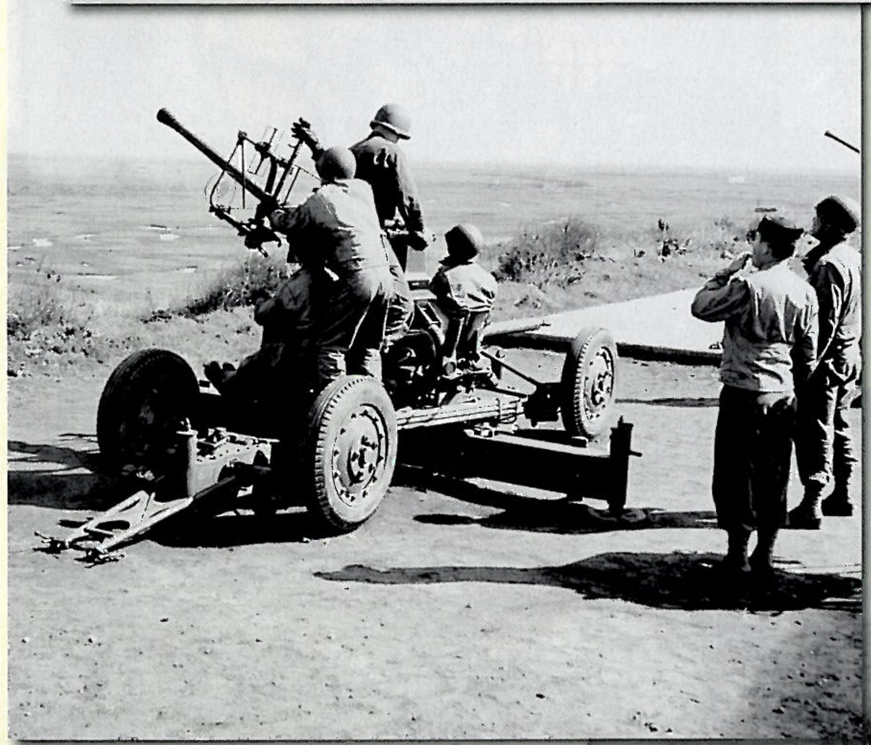


▼ Here a Bofors is being put in place. Note the crewmen unloading the director from the back of the CCKW cargo truck; it will be placed on the stand in the right foreground. Other crewmembers are lowering the stabilizing pads. A well-trained crew could go from travelling position to firing position in a mere 25 seconds.

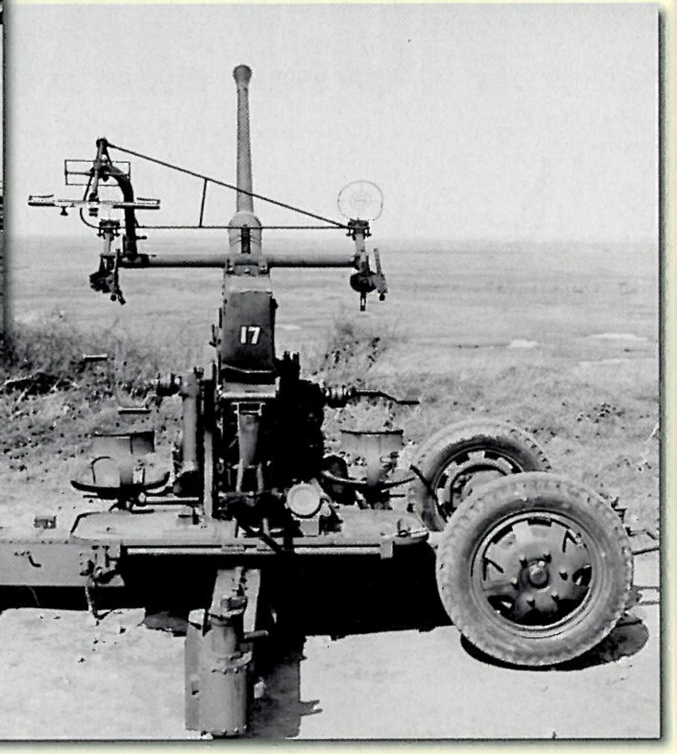
References - 40mm Bofors Gun, M1



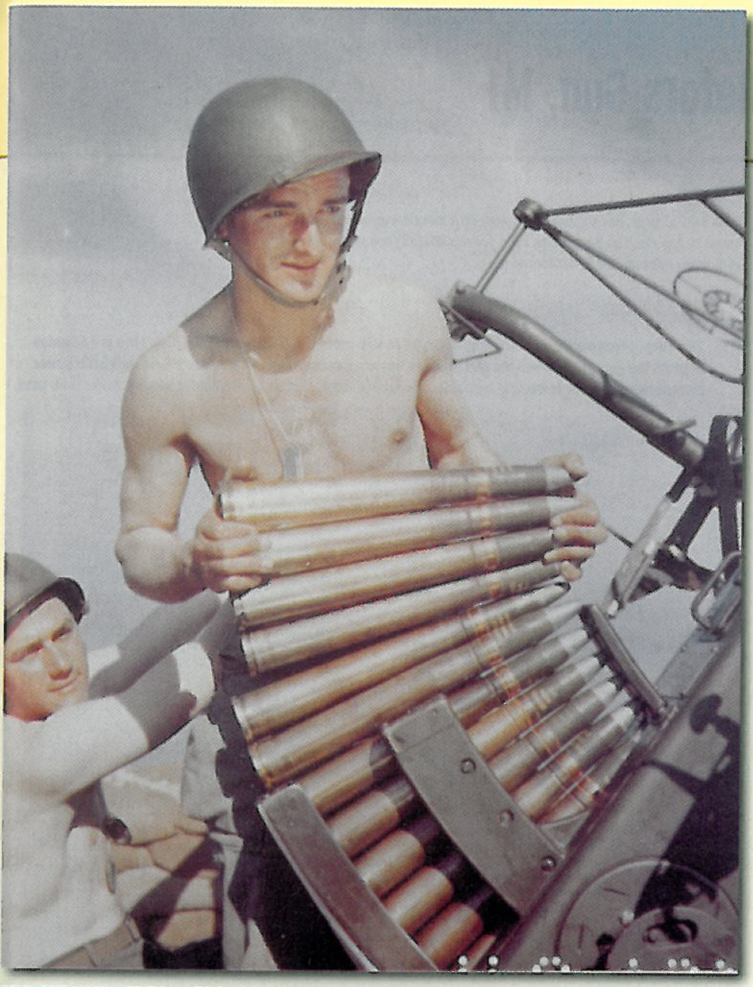
▲ Known as the Stiffkey Sight, this simple but ingenious mechanism moved the sights to properly lead the target. This weapon has been dug in, still on its carriage, into a hillside, which offered protection from two enemies – the Germans, and the winter wind.



◀ The Stiffkey was operated by a crewman on the left rear of the weapon, as seen here. The Bofors was very labour-intensive to operate, with much of the effort going towards feeding the gun's voracious appetite for ammo.

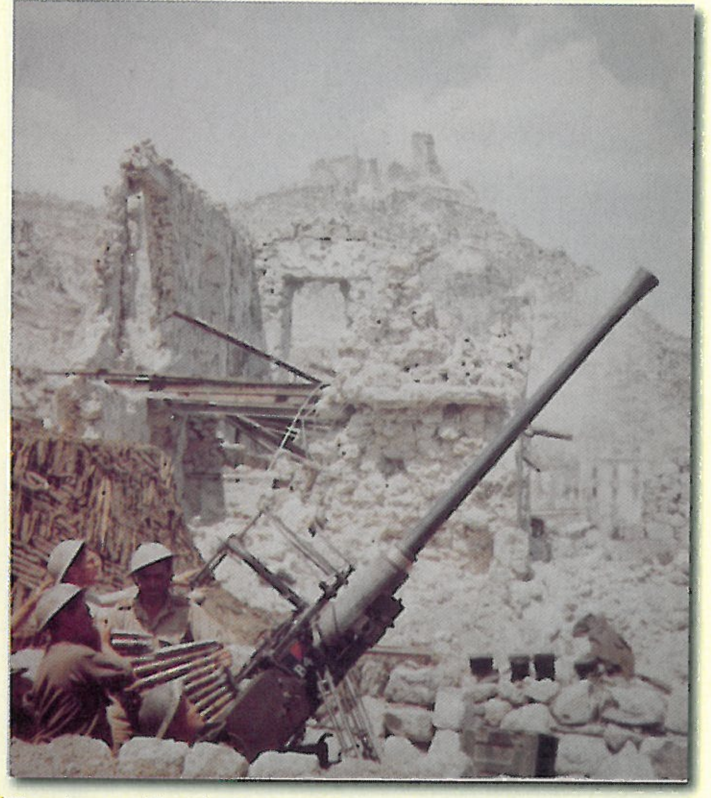


The complex structure of the Stiffkey sight is clearly ▶ visible in this view. Note that the wheel hubs are of the light weight spoked variety



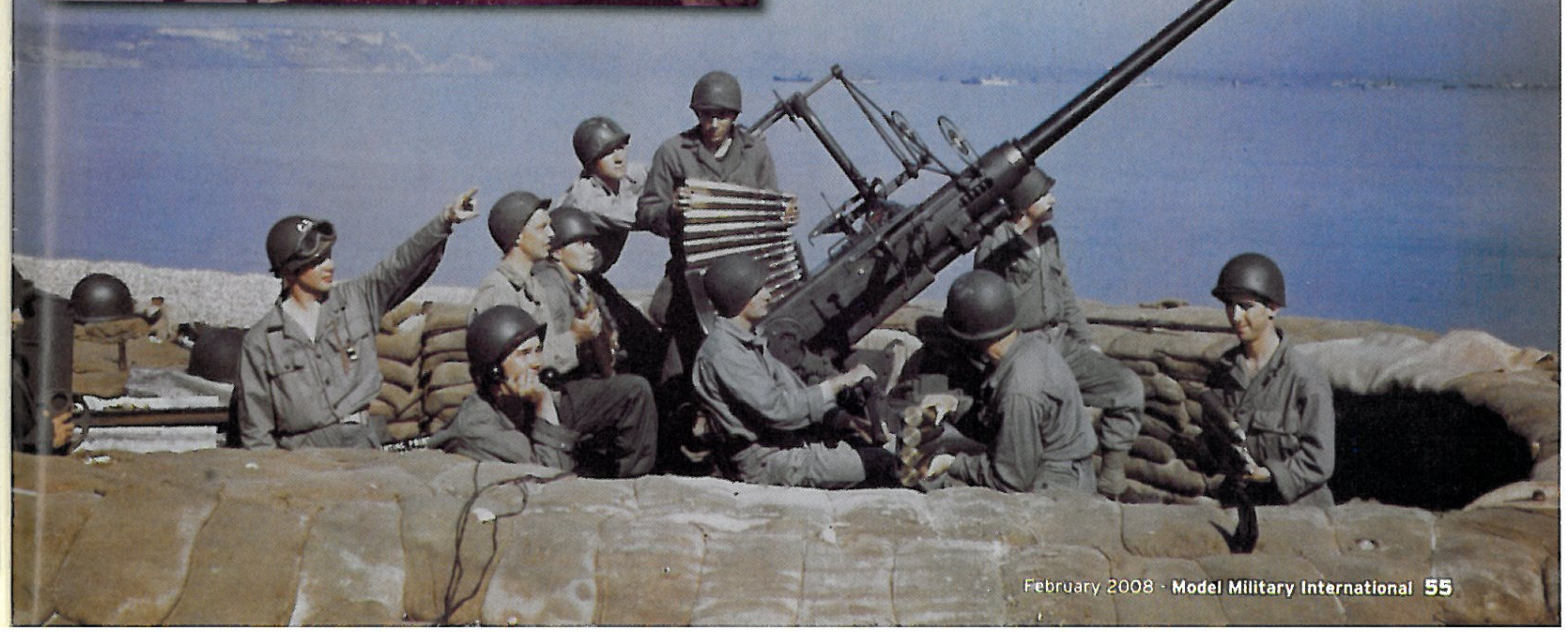
◀ Loader feeding four-round HE-T/SD ammunition clips into a weapon. Incendiary rounds were painted in a similar scheme, but with the very tip painted red.

▼ A British 8th Army Bofors in the ruins at Cassino. The Bofors was deemed so critical to the defence of the British Isles that a special movie – The Gun – was made in an effort to spur increased production. Note the Arm of Service marking on the side.

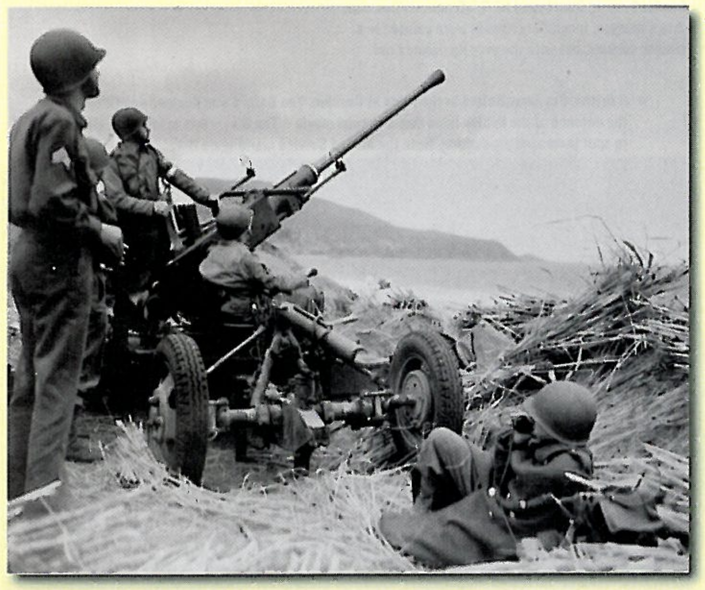


◀ The maximum rate of fire of the Bofors varied with elevation – the closer to horizontal, the faster the rate of fire, up to 120 rounds per minute. This was due to the gravity-driven shell ejection.

▼ With the M2 or M2A1 carriage, the gun had a maximum elevation of 90 degrees. It could be depressed to –6 degrees, or –11 degrees with the levelling jacks lowered. The gun could be rotated through 360 degrees when in the firing position.

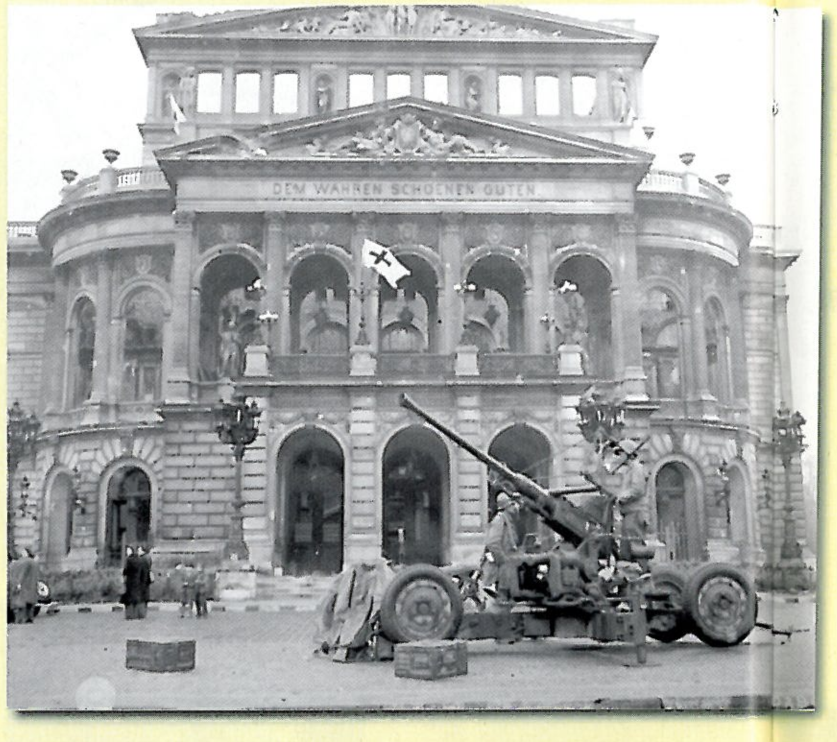


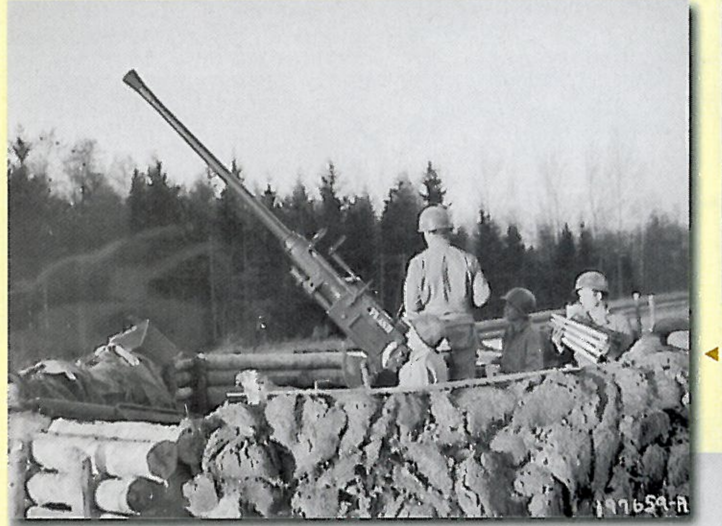
References - 40mm Bofors Gun, M1



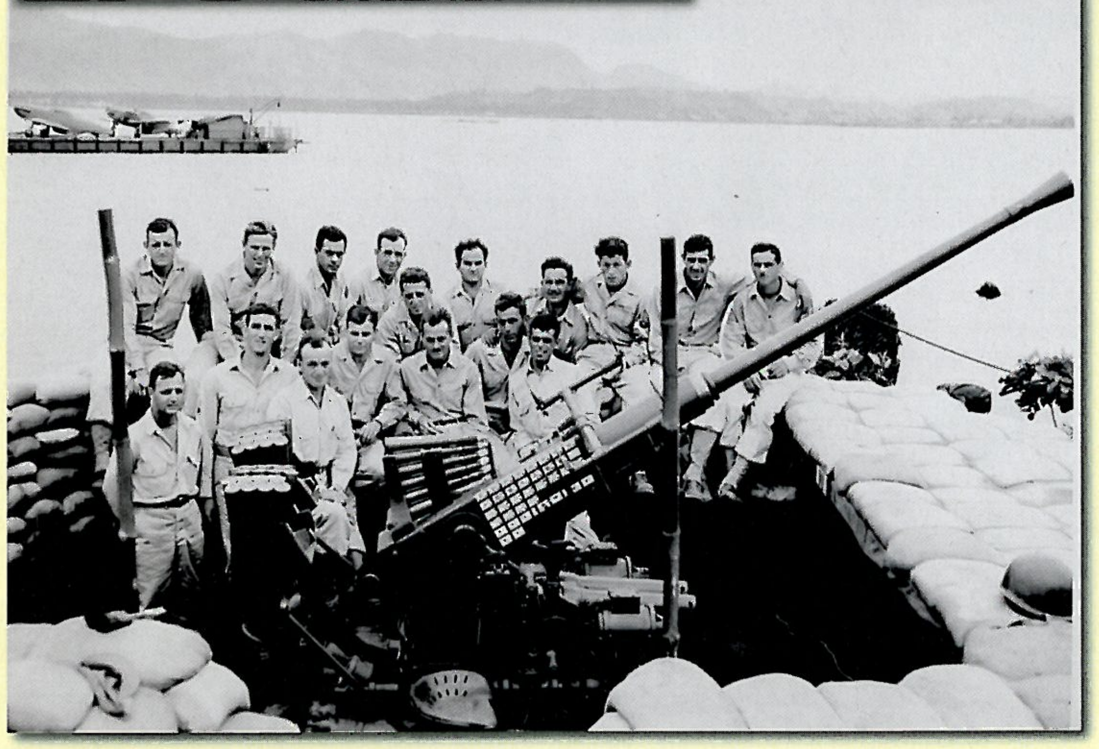
A US anti-aircraft Bofors gun in position on a mound overlooking the beach in Algeria. The Bofors has seen service literally around the world, with many armies, and in numerous wars.

The weapon was equipped with two spring-type equilibrators in tubular housings. These were in a trunnion beneath the gun and between the gun trunnion frames. Elevation and traverse was driven by 6 horsepower electric motors, when power was available. In the absence of electric power, double handle cranks were used.

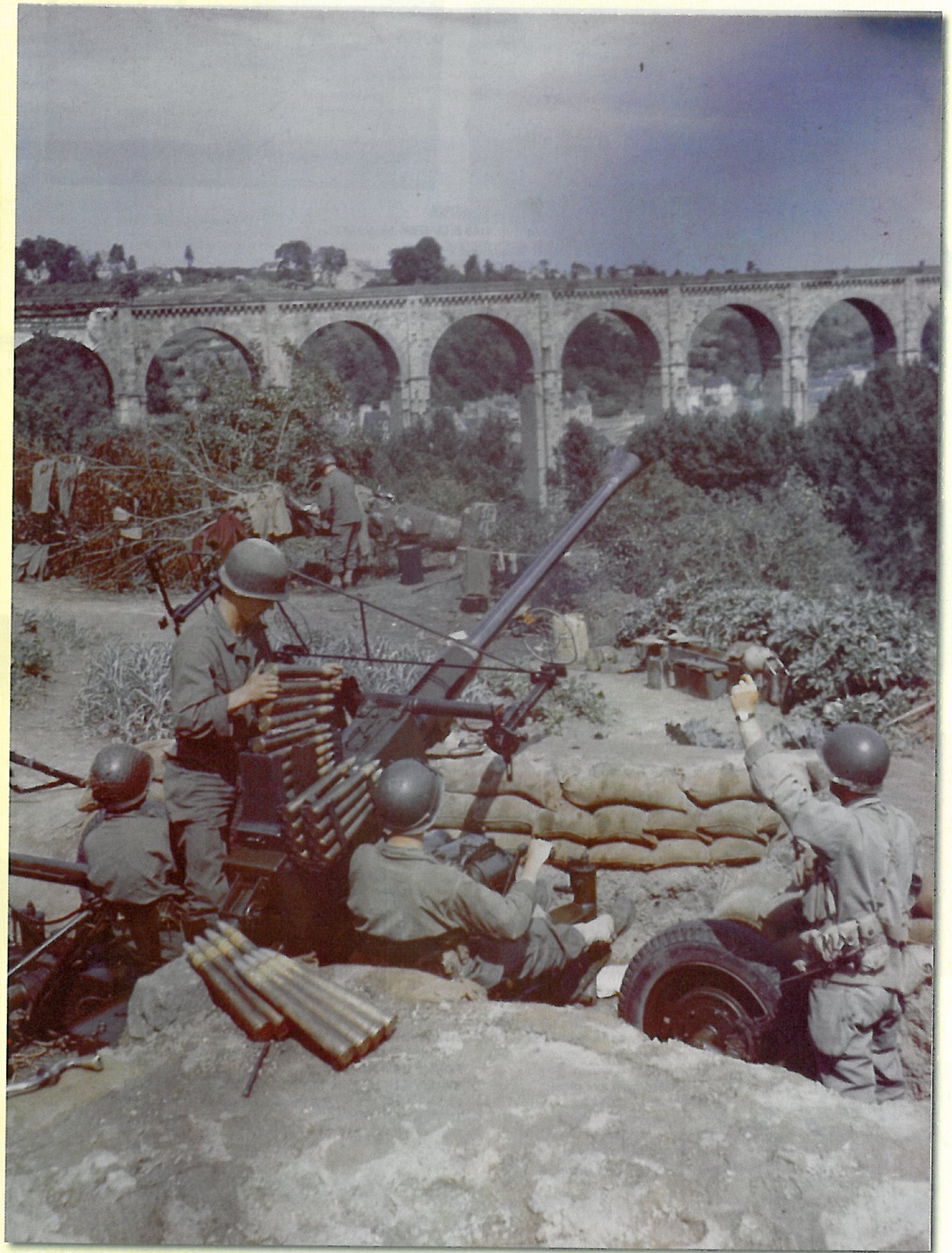




No splinter shield was provided to protect the crew on the army weapons. Hence they were often photographed surrounded by sand bags, berms, logs and other improvised fortifications.



The Bofors, like many anti-aircraft weapons, was effective against surface targets as well as airborne threats. The kill marks on the side of this weapon illustrate just how effective it was.



A small rack held two ready clips of 40mm ammo on the side of this weapon. Sustained firing could prematurely wear the barrel, so army gun crews had to be somewhat conservative. When mounted on twin and quad mounts on capital ships, the weapons were water cooled to counter this problem.

Incoming

TAMIYA
ICM
1/48
CITROËN TRACTION 11CV w/7 LUFTWAFFE CREW FIGURES

TAMIYA

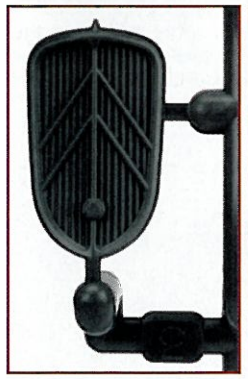
1:48 II CV ITEM NO.89731

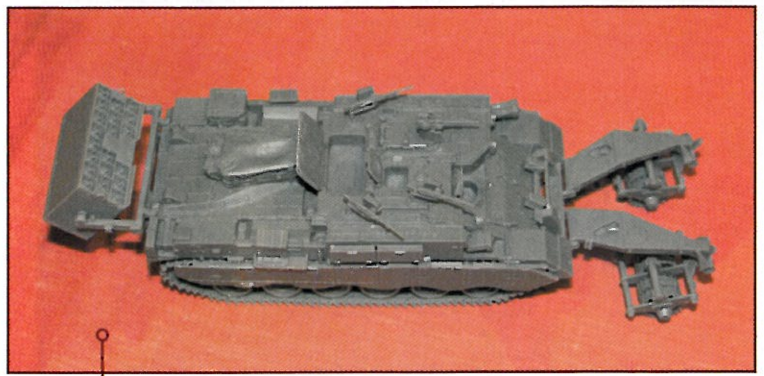
This is such a good release, used as both a civilian and military vehicle by the Allies and Axis, its diorama potential is awesome. Because it's a Tamiya kit, construction is simplicity itself, with only about thirty parts. The downside is that the doors are moulded shut, I really would have liked these as separate parts, and cutting them won't be easy. There are four decal options - two German, one French and one civilian. Something that did surprise me was the inclusion of seven ICM Luftwaffe figures. Have Tamiya ever included any other manufacturer's parts in their kits before? With luck they will keep doing this as these figures are great, very nicely detailed and a true match for other 1:48 figure ranges, previous Tamiya figures having been under scale, but maybe a couple of French Army and civilian figures would have been more interesting than all German, but then again that's me looking at this kit from an armour modeller's point of view. I suppose the 1:48 aircraft modellers will be happy with the choice of figures to go with their latest Messerschmitt or Focke-Wulf.

It would be 10/10 if they released it with openable doors.

Available from all good model shops.

9/10 - Michael Tooth





CROMWELL MODELS

1:72 COMBAT 72 PUMA CARPET

No, not a rug with a picture of a predatory wild cat on it, this is actually the Israeli personnel carrier version of the Centurion fitted on the rear with the Carpet mine clearing system.

The main hull is a single, superbly detailed cast piece of resin with the side skirts, hatches, small fittings and the large boxed Carpet system cast as separate pieces. As with all kits in the Combat Ready range, you will need to source references to help with the build, which does present a predicament as the quality of the model is faultless, but without some form of assembly instructions spoils the perfect mark.

Very highly recommended.

Available from cromwellmodels.com

9/10 - Graeme Carruthers

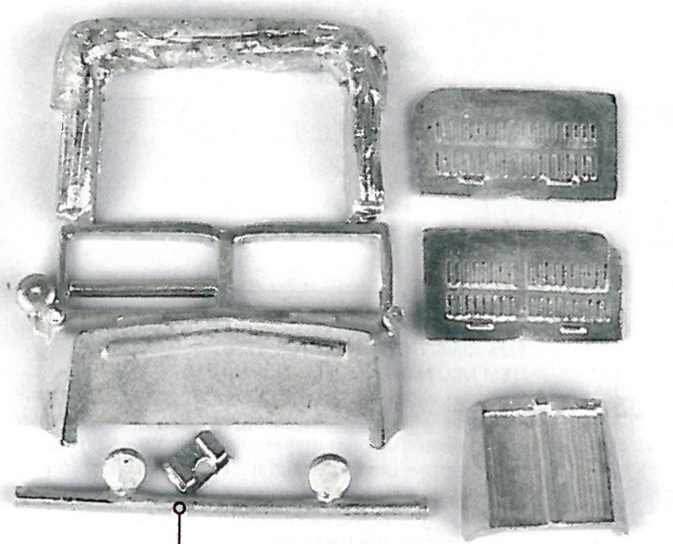
FRIULMODEL

1:48 WHITE METAL TRACK SETS
PANTHER EARLY TYPE ITEM NO.ATL-4809
PZ III-IV ITEM NO.ATL-4805
KV-1/KV-2 LIGHT TYPE TRACKS ITEM NO.ATL-4808
PZ III-IV ITEM NO.ATL-4804
TIGER II/ HUNTING TIGER ITEM NO.ATL-4806

Friulmodel have been doing a wonderful job of late by steadily producing their trade-mark white metal tracks for the ever-expanding range of 1:48 armour from the likes of Tamiya. I for one haven't been over keen on the link and length style tracks supplied in the Tamiya quarter-inch scale military range, and have had some problems assembling them on the kits I have built so far. Well, thanks to Friulmodel we have an alternative in the form of these superbly detailed individual track-links for the most popular vehicles in the range.

Available from www.historex-agents.com

9.5/10 - The Editor



MATADOR MODELS

1:76 BREDA TYPE 61 HALF TRACK CONVERSION FOR AIRFIX SD.KFZ 7 ITEM NO. KCIT-01

Designed to fit The classic Airfix Eight Ton Half Track and '88' kit. This seven piece set from will convert the basic Krauss-Maffei Sd.Kfz.7 into the Italian built Breda Type 61 with the help of a handful of cleanly cast white metal parts and a brief set of written instructions on the back of the packet. Something a little different to do with this classic kit.

Available from www.matadormodels.co.uk

8/10 - The Editor

ARCHER FINE TRANSFERS

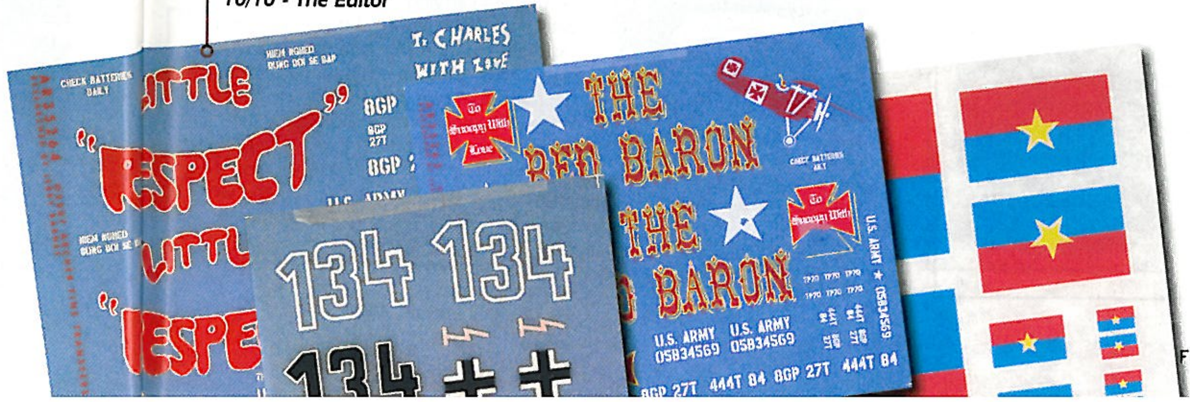
1:35 DRY-RUB DECALS

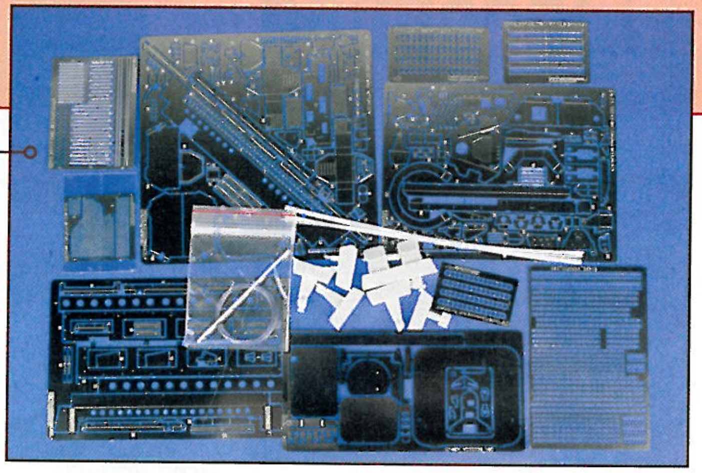
1:35 US 6TH ARMOURED DIVISION M4 (EARLY) ITEM NO.AR35252
1:35 US 6TH ARMOURED DIVISION M4 (EARLY) ITEM NO.AR35254
1:35 FREE FRENCH M4A2 2ND ARMOURED DIVISION ITEM NO.AR35255
1:35 FREE FRENCH M3A3 2ND DIV BLINDEE, 12TH REGIMENT DE CHASSEURS D'AFRIQUE ITEM NO.AR35256
1:35 FREE FRENCH M4A2 2ND DIV BLINDEE, 12TH REGIMENT DE CHASSEURS D'AFRIQUE ITEM NO.AR35257
1:35 1ST ARMOURED DIVISION IN TUNISIA (YELLOW) ITEM NO.AR35258Y
1:35 1ST ARMOURED DIVISION IN TUNISIA (WHITE) ITEM NO.AR35258W
1:35 TIGER I AUSFE.E (WILL FEY) SS PANZER ABT.102 NORMANDY ITEM NO.AR35259
1:35 NORTH VIETNAMESE FLAGS ITEM NO.AR35260
1:35 STUG III A/B LASSH FRANCE AND BARBAROSSA ITEM NO.AR35261
1:35 STUG III F/8 11 LUFTWAFFE FIELD DIVISION ITALY/GREECE 1943 ITEM NO.AR35262
1:35 M54 VIETNAM ERA GUN TRUCKS 8TH TRANSPORTATION GROUP CIRCA 1970 ITEM NO.AR35263
1:35 M54 VIETNAM GUN TRUCKS (27TH TRANS BATT, 444TRANS COMPANY) ITEM NO.AR35264

More excellent 'dry-rub' decals from Archer. This month we have some interesting markings for US Army gun-trucks from the Vietnam War. The markings are designed for the 5 ton M54 series, which I don't think is actually available as a plastic kit, but is available as resin conversion from Real Model for the Italeri M925 or if your budget will stretch go for the full resin kit also available from Real Model. The others sets we have received should please fans of German and Allied armour alike, with sets for short and long barrelled StuGs and Normandy tank ace Willy Fey's Tiger I. For the Allied modellers, we have some colour markings for Free French Shermans and Stuarts, and lastly some generic 1st Armoured Division markings for vehicles serving in Tunisia.

As we have come to expect, all the sets are superbly produced with all the multi coloured decals perfectly in register. What else can I say - these are my personal favourite choice of decals for all my projects where they can be used. Available from www.historex-agents.com and www.archertransfers.com

10/10 - The Editor





VOYAGER MODEL

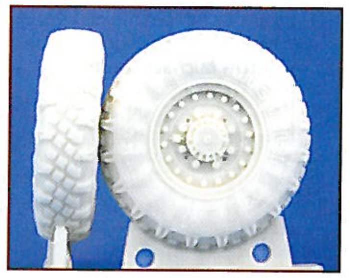
1:35 UPDATE SET FOR TRUMPETER STRYKER KIT ITEM NO. PE 35142

If you rushed out a bought a Trumpeter Stryker when they were first released only to find the detail wasn't as good as you would have hoped, then fear not, Voyager have sprung to the rescue with a number of update sets, including this comprehensive etched brass and resin detail set, consisting of no fewer than ten etched frets, a handful of resin parts, including accurate headlights, mirrors and winch cable end. A length of thin metal wire for the winch cable and a bunch of plastic rod to make up the stowage racks. To help add all this stuff voyager have included a very clear and concise set of five page instructions.

With the help of this set, the Remote Weapon Station upgrade, new wheels and the suspension cover set you could turn this into the ultimate Stryker, alternatively buy the AFV Club offering, or wait a little longer for the new Dragon kit. Silk purse from a sow's ear springs to mind. 10/10 for the quality of the set, but I can't help thinking, why bother?

Available from www.voyagermodel.com

10/10 - The Editor



VOYAGER MODEL

1:35 ROAD WHEELS FOR STRYKER ITEM NO. PEA094

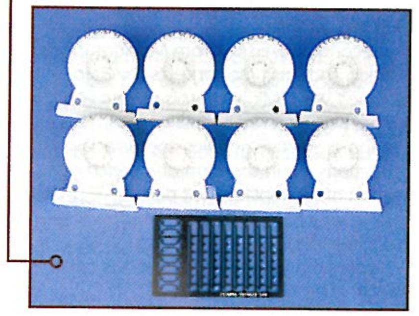
This set of replacement road wheels has been marketed for 'all' on the outside of the packaging, but inside states they are for the Trumpeter kit?

Anyway, Voyager have supplied eight beautifully detailed cream resin wheels, and a small etched fret containing the parts to make up the step rings on the hubs. The tread detail is very good as are the manufacturer's markings on the sidewalls of the tyres. The point where the casting plug joins the wheel has been made as thin as possible to facilitate removal, although care will still be needed to remove the remainder of the casting plug from in between the delicate tread pattern.

Certainly a big improvement of the wheels and tyres supplied in the Trumpeter kit.

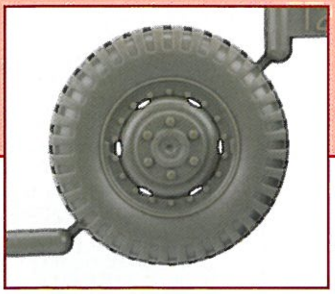
Available from www.voyagermodel.com

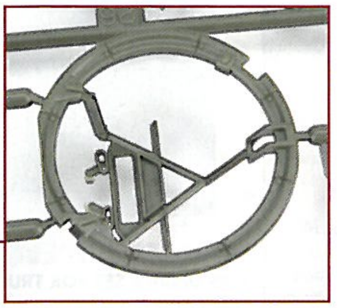
9.5/10 - The Editor

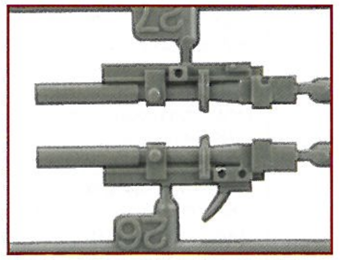


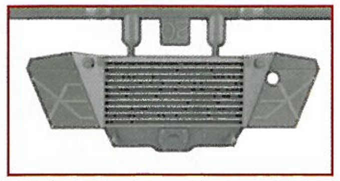
Incoming

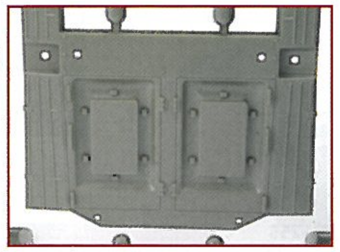
TAMIYA
1/48
U.S. M8 LIGHT ARMORED CAR
GREYHOUND









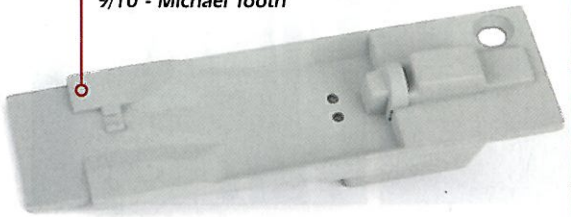


TAMIYA

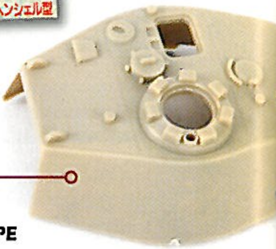
1:48 M8 GREYHOUND LIGHT ARMOURED CAR
ITEM NO. 32551

Tamiya's latest release is a great addition to the range. Like all the 1:48 vehicles it comes with a metal chassis, in this case a very small part, which adds nice weight but doesn't detract from the detail. Construction is faultless, which really helps with such a complicated vehicle shape with tricky suspension. What could have been a nightmare of sub-assemblies is made a pleasant quick build. There isn't any interior detail, which is a slight disappointment, so you can't leave the hatches open, but detail sets are sure to follow. There's also only a single crew figure included and two decal options for the 2nd and 4th Armoured Divisions. Available from all good model shops.

9/10 - Michael Tooth



キングタイガーヘンシェル型



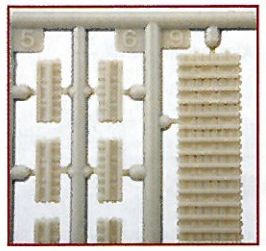
FUJIMI

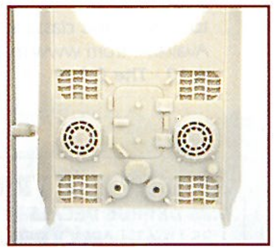
1:76 KING TIGER HENSCHEL TYPE
ITEM NO. 76044

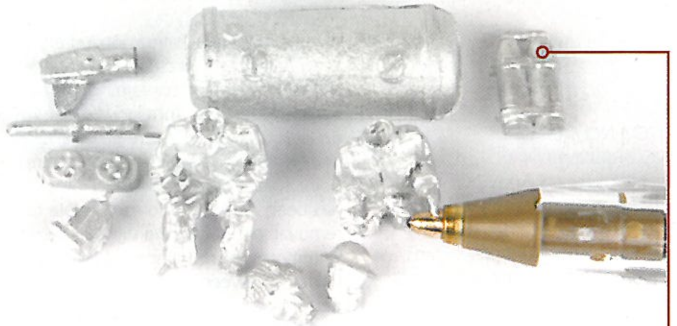
Modellers will remember the Fujimi 1:76 scale kits in their distinctive white boxes. In recent years they have re-released some updated versions, this example being the King Tiger with Henschel production turret. This kit consists of 193 plastic parts which is fairly impressive for a model of this size. Highlights of this kit include a full interior for both the hull and turret. The tracks are of the link and length variety although the detail is a little light. Only one colour option is suggested, a three coloured hard edge scheme, four divisional insignia are included although none of the units depicted were actually equipped with the King Tiger. Overall this is a neat little kit which is slightly showing its age But if 1:76 scale armour is your thing then this can be made into a very nice model.

Distributed in the UK by www.modelwholesaleuk.com
Available through your local Fujimi stockists.

8/10 - Jeff Adams







MATADOR MODELS

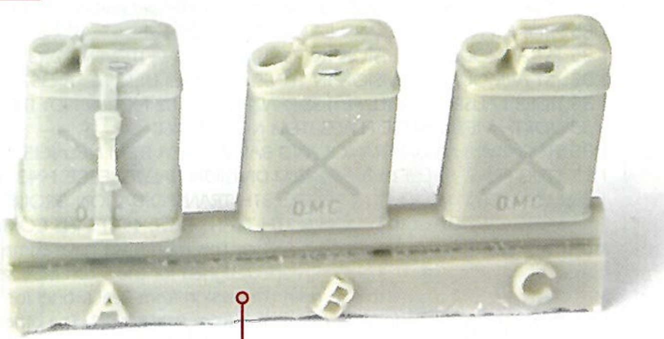
1:76 WASP MKIIC FLAMETHROWER CONVERSION FOR AIRFIX BREN CARRIER
ITEM NO. KCB-51

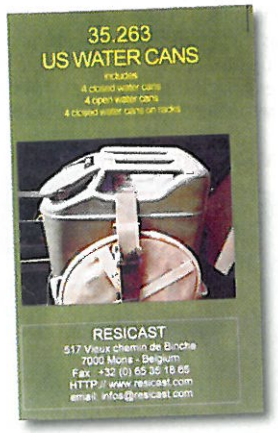
Our second conversion from Matador this month is again designed for an Airfix 1:76 kit, and this time converts the Bren Carrier into the sinister flamethrower equipped Wasp Mk IIc. In this release we get the large flame fuel-tank, compressed air tanks and flame gun. Also included are two half crew figures wearing protective goggles and balaclavas to fill the driver's compartment. Instructions are in the form of a sketch of a Carrier with arrows pointing out the location of the replacement parts.

Again a very nice conversion which will surely be appreciated by modellers of small scale Allied armour subjects.

Available from www.matadormodels.co.uk

8.5/10 - The Editor





RESICAST

1:35 US WATER CANS ITEM NO. 35.263

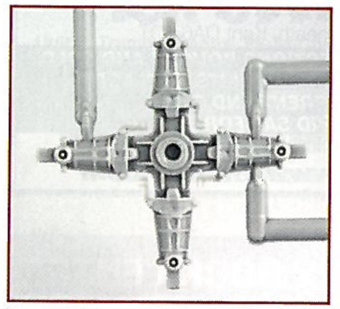
New in from Resicast are these twelve, five gallon US pattern water cans. Four are cast in standard carrying racks, four are cast with closed filler caps and the remainder are cast with separate filler caps to be displayed open. These cans are distinguishable from the more common fuel cans supplied in most kits by the larger circular filler cap, fuel cans having a smaller cap with four lugs around the circumference. A very useful accessory set for modellers of Allied subjects, and well up to Resicast's impeccably high standard. Thoroughly recommended.

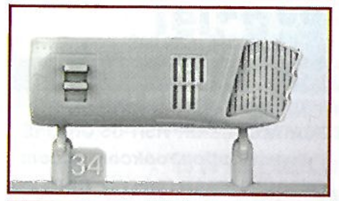
Available from www.historex-agents.com and www.resicast.com

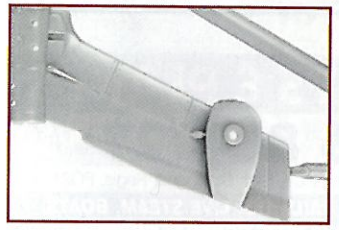
10/10 - The Editor

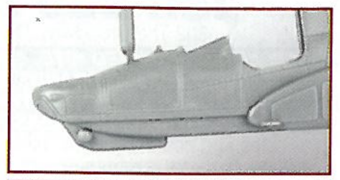
AH-64A APACHE

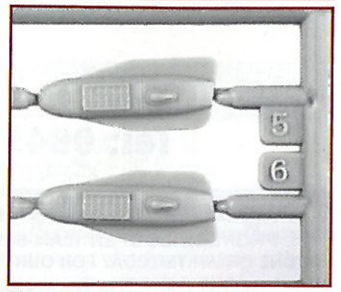
KA-50 BLACK SHARK

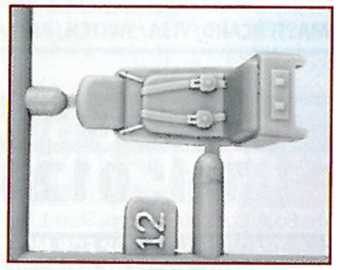












HOBBYBOSS

1:72 AH-64 APACHE ITEM NO 87218
1:72 KA-50 BLACK SHARK ITEM NO 87217

HobbyBoss has been very prolific of late and has added a couple of 1:72 scale helos to their range. First under review is the Apache - the kit comes attractively packaged with eye-catching box-top art (but the hovering helo seems to be pilotless!!) and two colour schemes illustrated on the sides. The kit comprises eighty eight pieces on three sprues, all finely moulded in pale grey plastic with no sign of flash. The level of detail is good with the panel lines/rivets, engine exhausts and the instrument panels being particularly fine. Decals are provided for two aircraft – one US Army and the other an Israeli Air Force machine. The decals themselves look to be in register and have minimal carrier film. The instructions are clear and concise and the translation from Chinese is getting better! Also included is a marking and painting sheet, but in monochrome only.

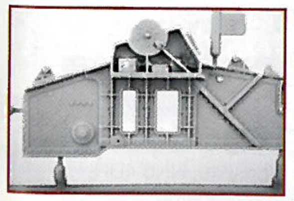
The second helicopter under review is the Kamov Ka-50, the Apache's Eastern Bloc rival. Eye-catching art work draws you to the kit although, once again, I'm sure that the helo is flying without a pilot! This time there are ninety three pieces on three sprues with decals for two Russian Air Force aircraft. Like the Apache, moulding is excellent with fine detail and the decals are very good. The instructions and marking/painting sheet follows the Apache style.

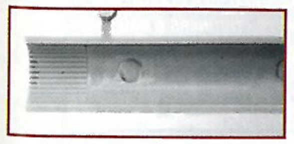
These are very good kits indeed and are well worth adding to any modern aircraft collection. HobbyBoss are producing some high quality models at reasonable prices and consequently building a well deserved first class reputation in the market place.

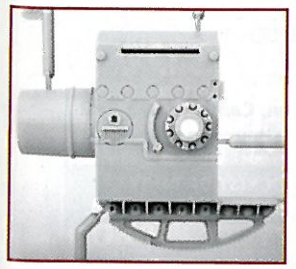
Distributed in the UK by Creative Models Available from all good model shops.

9/10 - Paul Egerton

Mörser KARL-Gerät 040/041 Initial Version
HOBBY BOSS







HOBBYBOSS

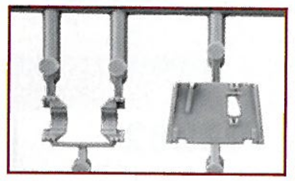
1:72 MORSER KARL-GERAT 040/041 INITIAL VERSION ITEM NO. 82904

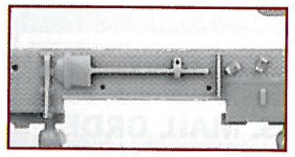
Among the heaviest self-propelled weapons ever built were Germany's super-heavy self propelled heavy mortars, often referred to as Karl. This latest release fro HobbyBoss depicts the Initial Version with its distinctive suspension and the kit consists of 194 plastic parts, four steel springs, a length of steel rod and a set of vinyl tracks. This kit will build into a truly impressive model and is highly detailed and all the parts are crisply moulded. The kit includes nicely rendered rivet detail, handrails that are commendably thin and the mortar itself consists of no fewer than twenty parts with the modeller having the option of building either the 600mm or the longer but smaller calibre 540mm barrel, both of which include partial rifling on the inside which is a nice touch. Only one marking option is included finished in overall panzer grey and named 'Eva'. Overall a great kit from HobbyBoss, recommended.

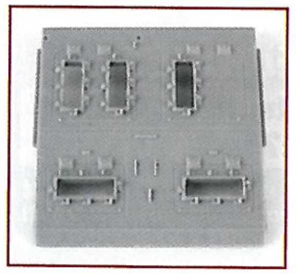
Distributed in the UK by Creative Models, available through your local HobbyBoss stockists.

9/10 - Jeff Adams

StuG.III Ausf.G EARLY PRODUCTION
DRAGON







DRAGON

1:72 STUG III AUSF G EARLY PRODUCTION
ITEM NO. 7283

The latest release from Dragon is the StuG III Ausf G Early Production, which will be the first of a series of StuG IIIs. This kit consists of 126 plastic parts, five etched brass parts on a small fret and the ever present set of DS100 tracks. Highlights include a tiny pair of artillery binoculars for the commander's hatch, a main gun with breech detail and a well executed loader's machine gun and shield. No less than five decal options are included, one from 2nd SS Panzer Gren Div and one from the Grossdeutschland (both finished in sand yellow over-sprayed in green), an example from 16th SS Panzer Gren div finished in overall sand yellow and finally the last two are whitewashed examples, one from 3rd SS Panzer Div Totenkopf which has some unusual kill markings and the last a captured example from the from the 1288 SP Gun Regiment of the Red Army. Overall a great little kit which will please most German armour modellers.

Available from all good model shops.

10/10 - Jeff Adams

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Next Issue

On sale February 7th 2008

SECOND HAND SCHLEPPER

Fraser Grey offers a step-by-step guide to finishing the SWS

DESERT STAR

Andy King reviews Tristar's diminutive Panzer I Ausf.A in DAK service

WING AND A PRAYER

Matt Wellhouser describes his latest work, this imaginative WWI diorama

...and much more!

FOR YOUR SAFETY

Don't forget, when using solvents such as glues, paints, thinners and cleaning agents, always ventilate your work area thoroughly and wear a face mask.

When using power tools, side cutters or any tool that can suddenly break or create high-speed airborne particles, wear approved eye protectors with hard, clear lenses. Please always model in safety!

Due to many influencing factors, we cannot guarantee the appearance of the above projects, but we'll try our best!

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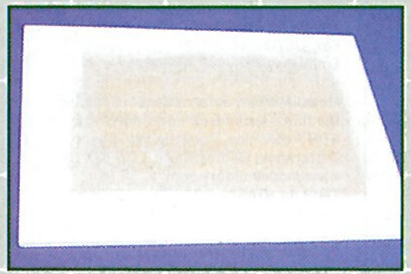
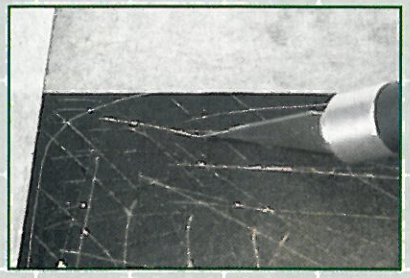
MAKING SIMPLE GROUNDWORK

Over the next couple of issues, we will show you an easy way to make a simple yet attractive scenic base on which to display one or more models. The advantage of fixing a model to a base makes it easier to transport, and also, places it in an atmospheric setting which helps complete the story of the vehicle that has been modelled. ■



The MDF base was supplied by Just Bases. It has been sanded and the edges have been given an undercoat with household gloss white - using a gloss paint stops the MDF 'furring' and doesn't soak in as much as a matt primer.



Once the edges of the base had received a coat of satin black, the boarder was masked off before scoring the area to be covered by the groundwork with a craft knife. By doing this will create a good key for the filler to grip.

For the groundwork, the main ingredient is a cheap, ready mixed interior wall filler. Another tip here is to add some earth coloured acrylic paint to the filler. This helps the filler to look like real earth and stops unsightly white filler showing through if the groundwork gets knocked or damaged.

The filler can now be applied to the base. This is best done using either an artist's pallet knife, or in this case a cheap spreader from a DIY store.

Spread the filler evenly and not too thickly. It doesn't matter too much about making it perfectly smooth, as any lines or ridges will be smoothed out when painting on the PVA glue afterwards.

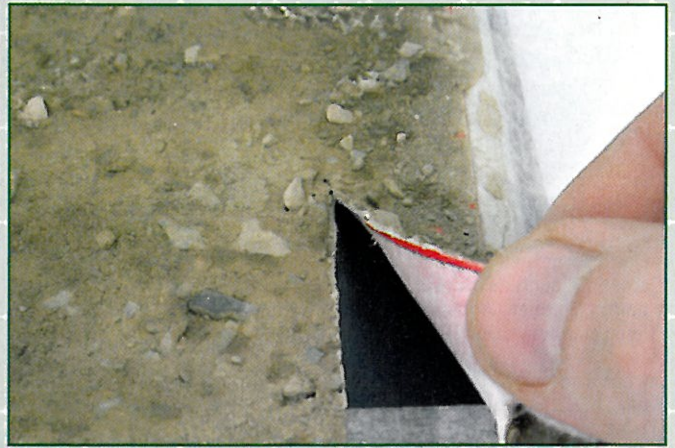
PVA wood glue was thinned with water before applying. Using thinned glue helps the filler to dry to a very hard and durable finish and it also soaks up the soil.

The thinned PVA is carefully brushed over the wet filler. Using a large brush and gentle strokes helps smooth out the filler and prevents it from being 'dragged' and lifting.

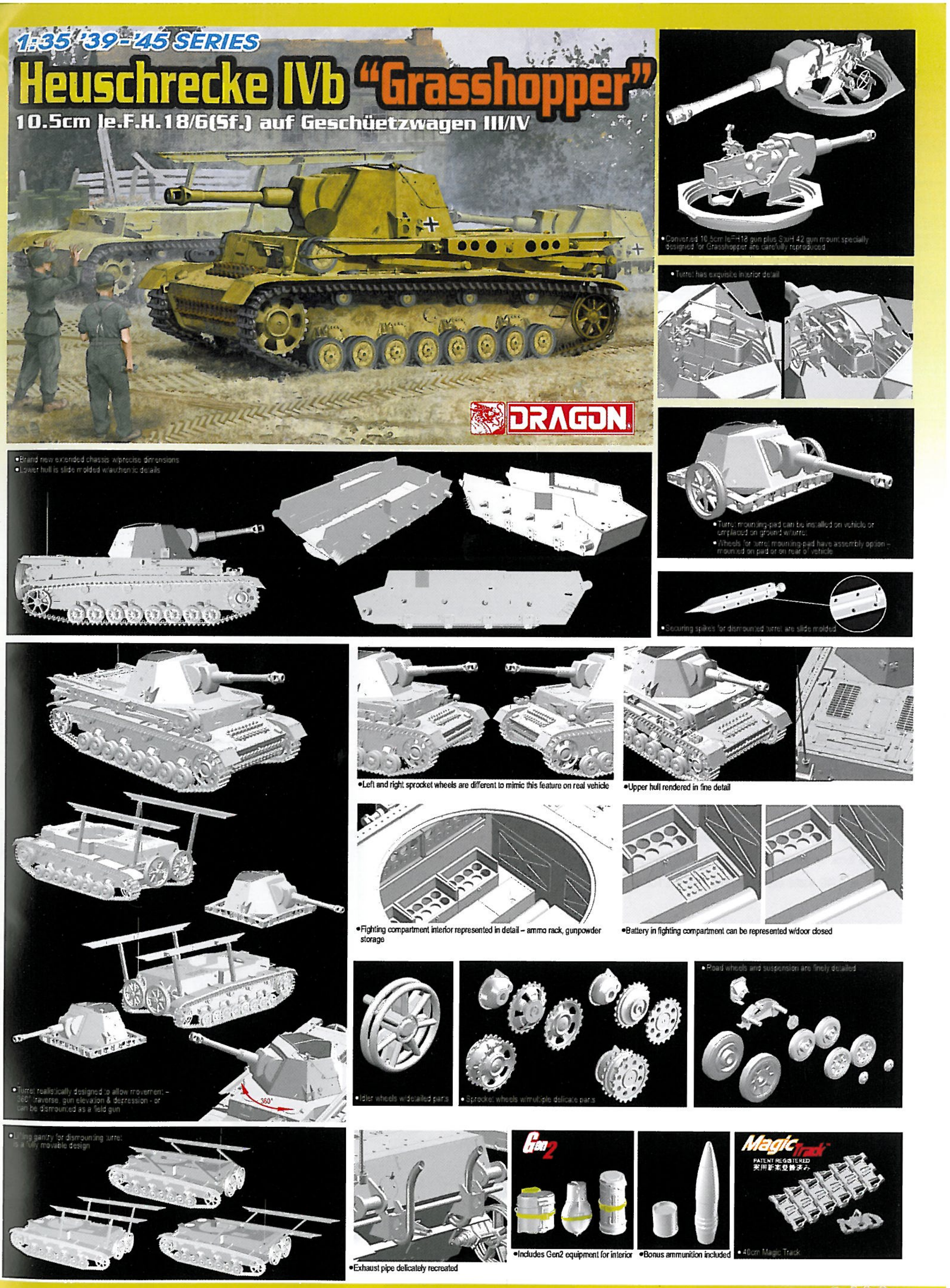
Real soil has been chosen to cover the filler. It needs to be dried out completely before using. Depending on the type of terrain you want to depict, it can be scattered on in this form, or sifted to remove any grit for a powdery finish.

The soil is sprinkled over the entire groundwork and left to soak in. I have found it best to keep sprinkling on the soil until it stops being absorbed by the glue mix.

Once the groundwork has started to harden, carefully tip the base up on end and gently tap from the underside to remove all the excess soil. The next stage is where we get to turn into a young child and make tracks in the mud! In this case a Bronco Staghound wheel was rolled backwards and forwards over the groundwork.



A technique I have found useful is to place a layer of electrical insulating tape over the masking tape to create nice clean edges. The tape needs to be removed before the filler has dried completely. If only masking tape is used, it will tear and not lift in one go. The groundwork is now left to dry fully, and do not be tempted to speed up the drying time with a hairdryer or fan heater, as this can cause the filler to crack - unless that is the effect you're after?



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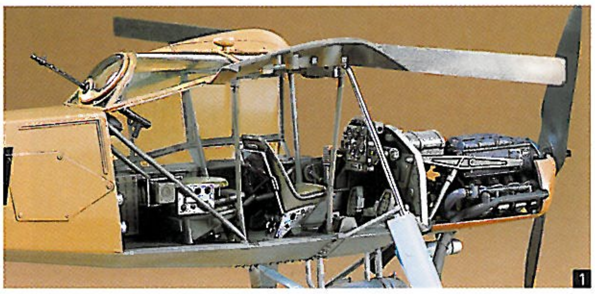

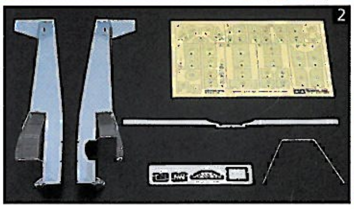

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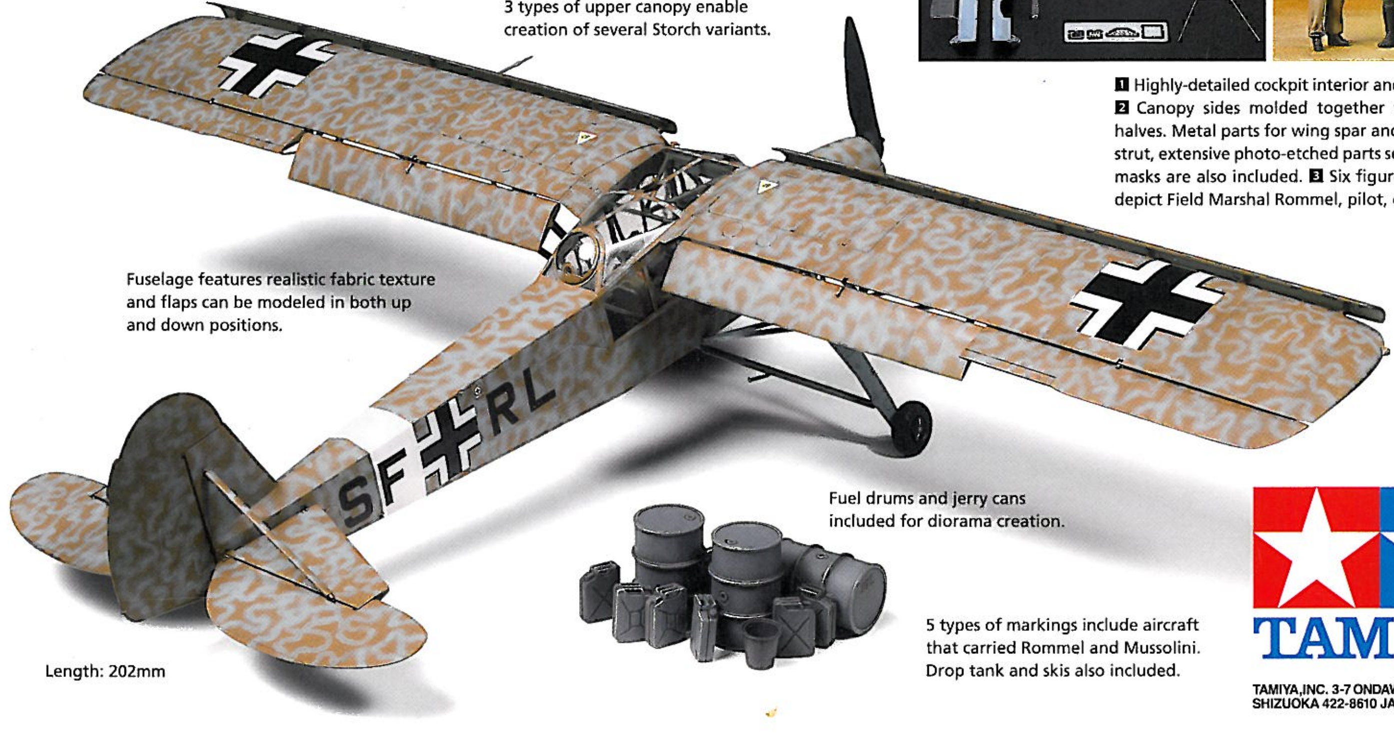

3 types of upper canopy enable creation of several Storch variants.

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Fuel drums and jerry cans included for diorama creation.

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